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Who really uses feminine rhetoric? : investigating student voices in the college composition classroom

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Who really uses feminine rhetoric?

Investigating student voices in the college composition classroom

by

Sandi Kay Skwor

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty

in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Major: English (Rhetoric, Composition, and Professional Communication)

Major Professor: Carol David

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2000

Graduate College
Iowa State University

This is to certify that the Master's thesis of
Sandi Kay Skwor
has met the thesis requirements of Iowa State University

Signatures have been redacted for privacy

There are two lasting bequests we can give our children: One is roots. The other is wings.

Hodding Carter, Jr.

To Laverne Skwor, my mom and constant support...

Without you, I would not have had the confidence to be the woman I am. Your unconditional love has been with me throughout, and for that, I am eternally grateful.

Far away, there in the sunshine are my highest aspirations. I may not reach them, but I can look up and see their beauty, believe in them, and try to follow where they lead.

Louisa May Alcott

To Wendy...

Your passion has given me vision. Your support has helped me finish. Meeting you has changed my life forever. Thank you.

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ONE

INTRODUCTION

This world taught woman nothing skillful and then said her work was valueless. It permitted her no opinion and said she did not know how to think. It forbade her to speak in public, and said the sex had no orators.

Carrie Chapman Catt (1902)¹

Language is power. But the question is who has the power to *make* language and hence has the power to make decisions about language? Andrea Lunsford suggests that men have mainly defined rhetoric and how language is used: “The realm of rhetoric has been almost exclusively male not because women were not practicing rhetoric. . . but because the tradition has never recognized the forms, strategies, and goals used by many women as ‘rhetorical’” (6). According to Lunsford’s claim, the decisions men make concerning rhetoric can influence discourse in high school classrooms, university classrooms, the workplace, and societal communities at large. Nevertheless, researchers and scholars have conducted research trying to establish if a “feminine rhetoric” also exists—if there is a difference in language use between men and women. Recently, a 1999 collection of essays is devoted to the power of language and the way women are using language to “help liberate them from oppressive circumstances and identities” (Hendricks and Oliver 1). However, previous research lacks a clear sense of how such a feminine rhetoric would define itself in the college classroom. This study will examine if a gendered rhetoric exists in the first-year

¹ Quoted in Kramarae, Cherie. *Women and Men Speaking: Framework for Analysis*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House, 1981.

composition classroom to determine how feminine rhetoric differs from masculine rhetoric and the implications of these differences.

Because past research of feminine rhetoric has centered on public and professional rhetors—female politicians, female scholars, and writing teachers (Campbell; David; Dow and Tonn; Key; Kramarae; Lakoff; Schowalter; Wagner)—no evidence focuses on feminine rhetoric and the writing of college students. Because teachers are preparing the leaders of the future, pedagogy chosen by instructors and illustrated in textbooks must be considered as well as the language used by students who enroll in composition classes. These choices can provide or deny the opportunity for young women and men to value all types of rhetoric.

This thesis focuses on student essays in Iowa State University's English 105, part of the First-Year Composition Program, to determine if women and men write differently. Three initial reasons propelled this study: 1) to fill gaps in previous research, 2) to influence pedagogy to empower women's rhetoric for its inclusion into the "rhetorical tradition," and 3) to fulfill my own academic curiosity. Although scholars have completed countless hours of research and writing relating to feminine rhetoric and communication, women's writing lacks the recognition and equity of their male counterparts. This study attempts to foreground feminine rhetoric in college composition. The additional efforts of investigation of feminine rhetoric present the opportunity for increased recognition of an alternative rhetoric. The analysis of student essays, reflections, and questionnaire will provide the information on whether women and men write differently, and hence influence the inclusion of feminine rhetoric as part of the rhetorical tradition and pedagogical practices. With the recognition of feminine rhetoric in student essays, academia has the opportunity to acknowledge and accept feminine rhetoric as a viable rhetorical style.

The majority of research on rhetoric originates from scholars in academia, who hope to improve theory and pedagogical practices. In turn, the achieved knowledge improves the scholar and is transferred to the students. Hélène Cixous writes, “Receivers are what they have received” (1249). Following Cixous’s thought, I believed a place to investigate feminine rhetoric is in the composition classroom because the material presented is the information students commonly receive, learn, practice, and take with them. Given problems occurring with the traditional view of rhetoric, three research questions emerge and are the core of this research effort:

1. Are there noticeable differences between women’s and men’s written essays in terms of content, organization, evidence, and stylistic choices in English 105? If so, what are they?
2. If writing differences are evident, are women consistently demonstrating what researchers label as feminine rhetoric?
3. If writing differences are prevalent in student essays, should teachers recognize feminine rhetoric in the college composition classroom?

In analyzing the data, I hypothesize that the students’ papers will show gendered differences in content, organization, evidence, and stylistic choices as former research has proclaimed. The results of the analysis will help me answer the questions offered by Bizzell and Herzberg and David: Are women contributing to rhetoric in their own style, and if they are, how and what are they writing?

The Importance: Recognition, Respect, Acceptance

Cheris Kramarae writes in her 1981 book:

Women's speech is devalued. Women's words are, in general, ignored by historians, linguists, anthropologists, compilers of important speeches, news reporters, and businessmen, among others. People who control public-speaking platforms and public airwaves have effectively restricted women's access to these resources. In more private settings also, women are more likely than men to be interrupted or ignored. (xiii)

Although Kramarae focuses mainly on spoken language, her claims can also relate to the written word. While female writers have made progress in the last eighteen years since Kramarae's publication, has the written word changed enough that women or men are able to use what researchers call feminine rhetoric without being criticized for being weak? Another question to consider is if women choose to retain the use of "masculine patterns," are the female writers still being viewed as harsh and insistent?

The main purpose of this study is to investigate whether characteristics researchers are labeling as "feminine" are apparent in first year composition essays, how students perceive themselves as writers, and how they analyze the rhetoric they produce. In turn, fulfilling my purpose may lead to further investigation of pedagogical strategies that are or are not allowing feminine rhetoric in the classroom. In the realm of language, women "have had little chance to introduce an alternative rhetoric to public speech" (David 155). Also, as noted, "it is more difficult for new feminist scholars to have their research accepted or voiced through traditional academic methods—possibly making academia a less viable option. How can new feminist rhetorical scholars establish a record of scholarship and research while

engaging in alternative methods and practices?” (Wertanen, Siebert, and Phillips). A step toward answering this question may lie in the composition essays. Perhaps this study can begin the process of change.

Teachers can make a difference. Cixous’s belief of the effect on the “receivers” from the presenters (teachers) mentioned above directly relates to this study. If teachers continue to teach rhetoric dominated by traditional male techniques and strategies, they risk silencing students. On the other hand, if feminine rhetoric is apparent and recognized, women will likely be in positions to make decisions concerning language and rhetoric, thus becoming a part of the rhetorical tradition. The recognition of alternative rhetoric in the composition classroom holds importance of its own: students would be greatly influenced since most are in their first year of college; students would have empowerment as writers, both for self-expression and grades; traditional hierarchical structures can be dispelled; those who would choose, or would like to choose, alternative writing methods would not risk being “nonacademic”; and teachers can avoid blocking students’ thought processes with designated schemata. The classroom is the place to lay the foundation for change; it is a place where future scientists, engineers, politicians, and teachers may be receiving the tools to make changes—changes in acceptance of differences in writing as well as in the world at large.

TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The events in our lives happen in a sequence in time but in their significance to ourselves they find their own order...the continuous thread of revelation.

Eudora Welty²

The main purpose of this study is to determine whether feminine rhetoric is apparent in student essays written in the first-year composition classroom. While an abundance of research has been conducted concerning feminine rhetoric and the workplace and general academic theory, the majority of research does not include feminine rhetoric in composition. Because of this lack of relevant literature, a few generative texts provide a concrete basis for defining feminine style and rhetoric, which in turn served as a guide for this analysis of students' written texts. A review of women's and men's rhetorical styles, strategies, and factors that influence language choices will follow. The research in the following summary includes linguistic and rhetorical perspectives because both play an equally important role in defining feminine rhetoric imperative for this study.

Are Women Even Contributing?

Women have made gallant strides since Virginia Woolf's plea for a room of her own. To say that women are not writing would be preposterous. However, Georganna Ularly does not hesitate to point out that "women typically have been the ones stifled by patriarchal discourse" (129). Ularly continues, "As a result of this patriarchal mastery, women are left

² *The Quotable Woman*. Philadelphia: Running P, 1991.

with no voice of their own. They are forced to conform to the ‘law’ that has been instituted by male subjects” (130). These statements create a quandary: Women are writing, but what and how are women writing? In order to be heard, are women denying their true voices to conform to the patriarchal dominance?

During my coursework in rhetoric, I noticed the dominant presence of males, particularly in rhetorical theory. Furthermore, the absence of women renders important gaps in scholarship. Two specific gaps have propelled me to investigate feminine rhetoric in the academy. Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg, editors of *The Rhetoric Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present*, suggest that there is no major rhetorical theory from women; therefore, are women even contributing (1224)? Additionally, Carol David points out that “there is no clearly developed women’s style that represents their individual personalities and the power of persuasion” (156). In response to Bizzell and Herzberg, why do these beliefs exist? Although Lunsford, and other researchers, attempt to answer the question, rhetoric labeled “feminine” remains on the margins of the “traditional rhetoric”—rhetoric dominated and created by males. In response to David, what can be done to fill this gap and develop an acknowledgeable woman’s style? The starting point for investigating the gaps is to examine writing completed in a course designed to improve writing skills while encouraging individuality.

Feminine Style from the Linguistic Perspective

Linguists and rhetoricians studying language both agree that culture and society influence the choices one makes in relation to language. “Most of the ways in which we speak are determined by factors beyond our control, such as the way we were brought up, the type of education we have had, the sort of job we had, the exposure we have to different

speech styles—all of which are largely related to socioeconomic factors” (Mills 93). While linguistic research is concerned primarily with speech, knowing the feminine characteristics of speech is important because everyday speaking influences how we communicate, including writing.

Linguistic researchers agree that different use of syntactic construction differentiates women and men (Key; Lakoff; Tannen).³ Some women are known to use more intensifiers, expressive forms conveying emotion rather than evaluation, and hyperbole (Key 67). Additionally, women refer to possibilities and probabilities (e.g., can, could, shall, should, will, would, might, may) (Key 68). Mary Ritchie Key points out that “females use more of these words that show indefiniteness, inconclusiveness, and uncertainty” (68). Robin Tolmach Lakoff reiterates this stance by adding other feminine style characteristics: forms that convey imprecision (e.g., so, such), indirect clauses and phrases to avoid any commitment to an opinion, and indirect statements that demonstrate politeness by the speaker/writer and allow for interpretation by the audience. Other characteristics of feminine style include tag questions and hedges, what Lakoff terms “deferential politeness” (37). Key adds, “Women tend to add tag questions, not because of lack of information but to reinforce the feminine image of dependency and the desire not to appear aggressive or forward” (69). Linguistic researchers also view code switching as a characteristic of feminine style. Women have the ability to use nonstandard forms in some contexts and standard forms in others. This is why in formal contexts women are rarely distinguishable from males; women are

³ It is important to clarify that neither the researchers nor I can generalize for all women and men. These researchers, I conclude, are speaking from a radical feminist perspective. Laura J. Gurak and Nancy L. Bayer distinguish the radical feminist perspective as the theory that values the characteristics “traditionally associated with the feminine (e.g., nurturance, pacifism, humanism, gentleness, intuitiveness)” (264).

following the dominant male pattern to be viewed as competent and increase the likelihood of their success (Trudgill 183). Some feminine characteristics emphasized by linguists are limited to oral phenomena; however, different syntactic constructions can be found in women's writing.

Feminine Style and the Written Text

An important text providing an extensive and clear focus on feminine style within written rhetoric is Karlyn Kohrs Campbell's *Men Cannot Speak for Her, Volume I*. Campbell centers her critical study on female rhetors of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century feminist movement; she examines early female rhetors because they used rhetoric to gain access to the traditional male domain in the public and political spheres. This position of early rhetors is an important aspect to consider, not only for the characteristics Campbell provides, but also because this study centers on the written text occurring in the traditional male domain of academia. Campbell believes the feminine style emerges out of a woman's experience. The use of anecdotes, the development of ideas inductively, using examples and experiences, and a personal, friendly tone are characteristics of the feminine style. This form of writing can be termed feminine because women's experiences are the basis for their discourse as opposed to discourse characterized by an authoritative or aggressive style. Aggressiveness—being clear and concise—has been traditionally viewed as a male characteristic and continues to be one to the standards of rhetoric today. Nevertheless, Campbell is careful to point out that this style is not for all women or for women only. She writes, "It [feminine style] has been congenial to women because of the acculturation of female speakers and audiences" (14).

In response to Campbell's 1989 publication, Bonnie J. Dow and Mari Boor Tonn discover a gap in scholarship between the feminine rhetoric of today and the early rhetors who were striving for reform. Dow and Tonn view contemporary feminine style as identifiable and as an alternative mode of reasoning, not just as a style created to relate to nontraditional audiences inexperienced in the public domain, as feminine language was viewed during the suffrage movement. In agreement with Campbell, Dow and Tonn believe the goal of feminine rhetoric is empowerment. Writers who use concrete examples and experiences encourage audience participation and reliance on the audiences' own experiences and instincts to form their own conclusions without heavy persuasiveness of the writer. Dow and Tonn's interpretation of feminine style reiterates Campbell's position; however, they add characteristics drawn from a variety of contexts. Feminine style uses colloquialisms, humor, personal anecdotes, narratives, and analogies. Furthermore, the style relies on family values—concrete examples and reasoning that relate to motherhood/child rearing. Dow and Tonn explain that women who use contemporary feminine style can use their practical wisdom from the private sphere and apply it to the public sphere.

As a follow-up to her original work and following Dow and Tonn's publication, Campbell continued her investigation of female speakers with a 1994 edited publication *Women Public Speakers in the United States, 1925-1993*. Adding to the feminine characteristics of the early rhetors, she discovered that feminine language also includes communication that is personal, experiential, participatory, emotional, and egalitarian. In opposition to the traditional pattern, some women tend to process inductively—develop, then generalize (xix).

Feminine Style and Surrounding Influences

During the first half of the twentieth century, the public discourse community was not an arena for women. David describes the early rhetoric taught in colleges as a “‘plain style’ with its emphasis on vigorous and forceful prose” and notes that these features are associated with male rhetoric (154-55). On the other hand, females developed a more indirect, cooperative, and emotional style of communication. However, any rhetorical practices differing from the mainstream were considered inferior (Campbell, *Women* xviii). Language, developed by men to “reflect their own concerns” (Bizzell and Herzberg 1225), perpetuated the subordination of women; women were encouraged to learn what men learned rather than employ strategies of their own. If women chose to use the traditional discourse, they were considered “unfeminine”; if they chose not to use it, women were considered unintelligent and not taken seriously (Campbell, “Sound”). Lakoff defines this double standard as a “razor’s edge”: if women play the game, they are too masculine; if they choose not to play, they are ineffectual in their professional lives (210-11). Using the traditional standards was a way for women to gain authorship and at least be heard. Joanne Wagner explains that “once women had learned to express themselves as men did, it would be difficult to convince them to limit their discourse to ‘appropriate’ subjects and socially sanctioned settings” (191). Thus, what some women may have viewed as abandoning a authentic feminine discourse was really a way to use the dominant structure’s tools (language) for the advantage of women and their strides to communicate in the public sphere. Carole Spitzack and Kathryn Carter discuss this different-role phenomena using Elaine Schowalter’s description:

“Women,” Elaine Schowalter explains, can then be seen not as persons who are “inside and outside the male tradition; they are inside two traditions

simultaneously.” The “bilingual” nature of women’s communication is called upon in differing contexts and in various degrees, depending, in the case of leadership, on the extent to which women’s experiences are given a voice.

(415-16)

Debra L. Peterson reiterates the women’s dual position in discourse: “For a female rhetor to appear credible, she must either find a public role that reaffirms her femininity while giving her authority to speak or she must assume a persona acceptable for both men and women” (384).

While it is apparent that women change rhetorical styles in order to have a voice, Ulary believes that this is a disadvantage to women. Ulary finds fault with our language system dominated by males that views women’s discourse styles and practices as inferior, leaving women without a true voice: “As patriarchal and phallo-centric, the law⁴ is programmed to restrict women’s free play of language while men ‘have the law on their side and they don’t hesitate, when the occasion rises, to use force,’ to lay down the law to women” (133). Ulary continues to point out that the traditional mode⁵ silences women’s own desires; rather her desires become those of the other (man):

Because of this, they [women] lack both autonomy and self-recognition.

Consequently, “if women are defined [and desire] according to masculine interests, given no place as active self-defined subjects and no language to speak their specificity, then how is change possible?” In their efforts to resist

⁴ “Law is the structure and order in our psychic and material lives. As Ulary explains, “this is the law that sets the parameters outlining what is communicable and what is nonsense” (132-33).

⁵ Ulary defines the traditional mode as “rational, representational, logical structure of language (i.e., the symbolic or masculine structure)” (130).

the patriarchal symbolic (what Lacan calls the master's discourse) women are prone to adopt the hysteric's discourse⁶ both somatically and verbally, as their only defense: "within patriarchal cultures and representational systems there is no space and few resources women may utilize in order to speak, desire, and create *as women*." (131)

In concordance with Ulary's beliefs, David writes, "There is no clearly developed woman's style that represents their individual personalities and the power of persuasion" (156). Two contemporary feminist literary scholars represented in Bizzell and Herzberg's history of rhetoric anthology, Cixous and Julia Kristeva, attempt to describe and exercise "woman's language" (emphasis mine).

Cixous's main premise, although Bizzell and Herzberg do not see her as a rhetorical theorist, is to define and demonstrate a new way of using the language: "a woman must write herself" (Cixous 1232). However, Cixous knows the reality of this premise, "There's no room for her if she's not a he" (1241). Nevertheless, Cixous claims that women must discover the "desires" Ulary discusses above, uncensor herself, recover herself...get "back her goods, her pleasures, her organs, her immense bodily territories which have been kept under seal" (1236). The return to her own desires will release her from guilt...guilty from desires, from frigidity, too maternal or not enough (Cixous 1236). The conformity described by Wagner, Spitzack and Carter, and Peterson is precisely what Cixous argues against. Women have always "functioned within," and therefore, it is time that women's language rejects the male-dominated systems (Cixous 1240). Cixous calls for the time "for her

⁶ Feminine language, opposed to the masculine symbolic, that is "the expressive, affective, drive-related experience of human subjectivity" (Ulary 130).

[woman] to dislocate this ‘within,’ to explode it, turn it around, and seize it” (1240).

Cixous’s vision of a language that is distinctly female is somewhat of a utopia; she fails to succinctly describe and/or explain how one should write from the body, nor does she explain how to discover if a woman is truly writing from the body.

Kristeva, differing to some extent from Cixous, highlights the presence of women but questions if a distinct feminine language is possible. Kristeva does not see the gap that Cixous sees in traditional rhetoric. While Kristeva is interested in what it means to be a woman, she is equally committed to dismantling all ideologies (Kristeva 1255). In other words, Kristeva calls for a type of “reconciliation” (my emphasis) where women break down the walls of ardent feminism and where men and women borrow from each other—similar to Peterson’s position previously mentioned. Whereas Cixous would criticize this borrowing, Kristeva would see this “reconciliation” as a way to use “the dominant’s tools” against those who dominate and make language decisions. Kristeva encourages women to “counterinvest”:

She may, by counterinvesting the violence she has endured, make of herself a ‘possessed’ agent of this violence in order to combat what was experienced as frustration—with arms which may seem disproportional, but which are not so in comparison with the subjective or more narcissistic suffering from which they will originate. (1262)

Kristeva considers it worse for women to try to create something new—a new women’s language—only to be ignored and remain unacknowledged in the broader scope of the rhetorical tradition.

The research presented above provides a selective, but important, foundation for the analysis of the students' written essays. The students involved in this study constitute a new generation of writers—a generation that has voiced, somewhat naïvely in my opinion, that inequity between women and men is something of the past. Ironically, the inequity of the past is what has denied women writers from having a rightful place in the history of rhetoric. Elaine Schowalter writes in “The Female Tradition” that a lack of female tradition is a result of lacking a collective history:

Each generation of women writers has found itself, in a sense, without a history, forced to rediscover the past anew, forging again and again the consciousness of their sex. Given this perpetual disruption, and also the self-hatred that has alienated women writers from a sense of collective identity, it does not seem possible to speak of a ‘movement.’ (273)

Schowalter finds difficulty studying feminine writing for two reasons: one, the past research is “inaccurate, fragmented, and partisan” because only the “great novelists” have been studied⁷; and two, past research has had difficulty studying women’s writing because of the researchers’ tendency to follow the societal influence on the feminine (271). Schowalter’s points relate directly to this study: one, if only the “greats” have been researched, who were mostly novelists, then there is plenty of room for the study of the average writer, especially in composition; and two, society does indeed have an influence on how women and men write as well as how their writing is analyzed. Analyzing essays written by women and men in the classroom is a beginning step to discovering if women and men do write differently. And

⁷ Schowalter is referring to Jane Austen, the Brontes, George Eliot, and Virginia Woolf. It is important to note here that since this publication, more research has been completed on women. However, Schowalter’s point that more consistent research is needed to truly gain a sense of history is well taken.

answering this could be a step toward gender equity, and hence give recognition, respect, and acceptance to alternative types of rhetoric.

THREE

METHODOLOGY

This has always been a motto of mine: Attempt the impossible in order to improve your work.

Bette Davis

Writing is a communication tool. We write to convey meanings, thoughts, feelings, and beliefs; through writing, people discover what they have to say. Essentially, the reasons why women and men write do not differentiate them from each other. However, some researchers believe that how and what women and men write can be quite different. The question then becomes, do differences exist between women's and men's writing in particular contexts, and if so, what are they? This initial question sparked my curiosity, challenged my knowledge base, and propelled me into this study of first-year composition students' essays at Iowa State University.

Context

The study took place at Iowa State University (ISU), a large Midwestern land-grant university, during the spring semester of 1999. Two sections of English 105, the second semester of the First-Year Composition program, were the classroom sites, and I was the instructor. I chose this context for two reasons: one, ISU is where I am completing my graduate work, which allowed me "freedom of access" (Doheny-Farina and Odell 511); and two, the classroom is a uncontrived setting where researchers can "investigate phenomena in the social contexts in which these phenomena routinely occur" (Doheny-Farina and Odell 506). With approval from the university's Human Subjects Board, the students were invited

to participate in the study with a consent memo detailing the purpose, their voluntary participation, and their option to exit the study at anytime (see Appendix A). Their signatures of participation and permission provided access to photocopying their written essays, giving a written questionnaire, and receiving a final reflection. At any time, the students could choose to exit the study with no effect on their grades or instructor attitude.

Researcher Role

In the majority of researching situations, the researcher must account for her/his role as the researcher. Because I was the instructor of the classes that provided the data, special precautionary measures were taken in every aspect of the study. To offset researcher subjectivity, special objectivity elements were designed into both the method for collection and the resulting analysis instruments. However, Corrine Glesne and Alan Peshkin offer a positive connotation to subjectivity:

My subjectivity is *the* basis for the story that I am able to tell. It is the strength on which I build. It makes me who I am as a person *and* as a researcher, equipping me with the perspectives and insights that shape all that I do as researcher, from the selection of topic clear through to the emphases I make in my writing. Seen as virtuous, subjectivity is something to capitalize on rather than to exorcise. (104)

In respect to Glesne and Peshkin's quotation and to precautions put in place, I felt confident going into this study. I believe that academic and personal interest in the topic, integrity as a researcher and writer, and desire to empower students through the use of rhetoric could be variables to make this study a success.

Participants

The English 105 classroom consists of students from all colleges of ISU because First-Year Composition is a requirement for all students prior to graduation. While not a bonafide random sample, the students enrolled in a somewhat random order, representing a cross-section of average 105 students. Nevertheless, the purpose of this study is not to provide overriding generalizations and conclusions for all female and male writers but to investigate if a particular phenomenon is occurring in the composition classroom. The participant group was homogenous and included a total of 49 students, 17 females and 32 males. The participants were traditional college age students (females 19-25 years old and males 19-24 years old); the majority were first year students (16 out of the 17 females and 28 out of the 32 males); and most students were from the state where the university is located (13 out of the 17 females, with one from Germany, and 25 out of the 32 males). Additionally, all of the participants, except for the student from Germany, graduated from U.S. high schools and have been exposed to traditional writing instruction; at least 12 percent of the female and male students have had at least three years of high school English prior to attending the university. (See Appendix B for complete demographic information.)

Site

While Glesne and Peshkin advise against research studies conducted in a person's "own backyard" (21), using one's own students has advantages that outweigh the negative aspects. One advantage is time with the participants for the entire spring semester for observation, knowledge of the content presented each day, and in its own way, an "unobtrusive presence." This extensive time on site outweighs the benefits awarded to the casual observer, who may have been in the classroom once a week, or less. "Time at your

research site, ...time to build sound relationships with respondents—all contribute to trustworthy data” (Glesne and Peshkin 146). Another advantage of a regular classroom was that the setting remained typical for writers in academia. The classroom policies remained the same whether or not each student did or did not participate in the study. Upon receipt of each participant’s consent, the study was not mentioned again until the final exam date to specifically offset the students being influenced by the study. However, if at any time a student had questions, she/he was not discouraged from asking. (The schedule of activities did not change to accommodate this study.) Thirdly, by being the instructor of the classroom, I was aware of my behavior, the classroom behavior, and the daily tasks that occurred throughout the sixteen weeks. Although observation was not a major part of the data analysis, this time spent in the classroom provided additional perspectives not available to the causal observer. Lastly, because of the lack of composition research on feminine rhetoric conducted ethnographically, the classroom site could be of interest to others in the field of teaching and researching via a benchmark study capable of replication.

I was and am aware of the limitations of using my own students and classroom site. Under the circumstances, I attempted to remain objective; however, I cannot necessarily account for my unconscious wish to see something that may or may not have occurred. Any research study must face the possible risks of subjectivity and response effects; mine is no exception. Nevertheless, I accounted to the best of my ability for elements that possibly could have tainted this study in order to have a successful outcome.

Data Instruments and Collection

Stephen Doheny-Farina and Lee Odell point out that researchers “can strengthen the validity of their conclusions by a process called triangulation” (508). Based on this,

“methodological triangulation” was used employing three different methods to collect data: students’ written texts, a final reflection, and a questionnaire.

Student Essays

The first method of data collection was the students’ written texts of four essays assigned during the semester. The student texts represented first-hand, authentic material. To keep the study identical to the typical classroom, I did not change the assignments from the original semester plan. (See Appendix C for syllabus and Appendix D for assignment sheets given to students.) The students’ essays were photocopied prior to any comments and filed for analysis after final grades were submitted. There were 296 total papers: four separate assignments from each participant from the two sections of English 105. Essays ranged in length from one to eleven pages.

Reflections

The second method of data collection was the final reflection authored by the students discussing their own rhetorical choices made on the final assignment (see Appendix E). The point of the reflection was to provide additional data concerning the students’ thought processes as they composed the final essay. The final reflection was assigned at the same time as the final essay so the students could track their own writing processes without a time constraint. Each student received five points for completing the reflection; the five points were built into the syllabus beforehand for the student’s final self-evaluation. To encourage authentic, thoughtful, and honest replies in the reflections, I arranged for the students to place their reflections in a sealed envelope on the final exam date. The last student sealed the envelope and delivered the envelope to the English department secretary; I retrieved the envelope after reporting final grades. Interviews would have been the ideal in comparison to

written reflections, but time constraints and student availability hampered the possibilities of interviewing after the semester. Therefore, the final reflection was created to provide answers that would have otherwise gone unknown. The material from the written texts will be valuable; however, the student reflections were administered to explain phenomena (the forthcoming results) that could not have been controlled because of the lack of material provided about their lives, their backgrounds, or their thoughts as they composed.

Questionnaire

While the student essays and reflections provide valuable, tangible data, a questionnaire serves an invaluable purpose as well: the questionnaire can provide data that may not be evident in their writing samples. The questionnaire—demographic questions, questions using a Likert scale, and open-ended questions—provided background information, personal characteristics of the students, and answers to contrived situations (see Appendix F). From the given information, such as previous high school and college English courses, it was hoped that connections could be drawn between experience and their present writing styles. Also, the questionnaire provided an additional means of gaining knowledge of the students' behavior characteristics and their beliefs concerning rhetoric. The questionnaire was administered on the final exam day, and as before, students placed their questionnaires in a sealed envelope to be analyzed after final grades were reported. Special attention was given to the collection procedure to avoid any possibility of confounding variables.

Collection of Data

In Jennie Nelson's study of writing processes in the classroom, she notes, "One of the most important features distinguishing academic work from other tasks is that it takes place in a highly 'evaluative climate' in which grades are exchanged for performance" (97).⁸ Student's academic performance and actions result in grades and had the possibility of confounding this study. For this reason, out of respect for the students, and to negate any possible bias or unconscious analysis, all data were sealed until the students' final grades were submitted. The essays were photocopied before instructor comments and placed in files until analysis for the study. On the final exam day, each student personally placed her/his final reflection and questionnaire in separate envelopes. The last student sealed the envelopes and delivered them to the ISU English Department secretary for retrieval after submission of the final grades. The collection process was discussed with the students in order to encourage honest and perceptive replies, as well as to protect the validity of the study.

Method of Analysis

The analysis process began with a colleague coding each essay and removing the names from each essay approximately one month after the final dates of the spring semester. Individual essays were coded by class and essay: each of the two class sections was "A" and "B" respectfully, and each essay was designated 1, 2, 3, or 4. The essays were separated into their respective piles designated by section and essay, and essays were randomly chosen and given A1 for the first section, first assignment, A2 for first section, second essay, etc.

⁸ Nelson is quoting from Doyle W. "Academic Work." *Review of Educational Research*, 53 (2), 1983: 182.

Once all the papers were coded, a colleague recorded the coding letter and number and gender on one sheet and the coding letter and number with name of student on another sheet, placing each coded register in separate sealed envelopes. The sheets were taken and filed for safekeeping until after the completed analysis. My colleague then removed the names of the students from the essays. The reflections and questionnaires were not coded for anonymity because the purpose of them was to provide a broader understanding of the why and how of the students' writing processes; therefore, the names on the reflections and questionnaires were necessary to compare the essays to the authors' reflections. In addition, if a question arose about what a particular student wrote or about her/his thought processes, the reflections provided an avenue for answers.

For two reasons, the goal of the analysis was not to review the papers for traditional organizational effectiveness, grammatical correctness, or overall achievement of the assignment objective: one, the research intention was not to distinguish right or wrong or better or worse writers; and two, traditional organization and rules are based on male dominated theories and traditions. Instead, the analysis involved using an operational definition created to discover if writers in the college composition classroom are demonstrating (or not demonstrating) the use of feminine rhetoric.

Unlike other empirical studies, I solely performed the analysis and coded the essays for the evidence of the writing characteristics. When creating the operational definition and coding categories for this study, I implemented past research findings and additional writing characteristics that became evident as patterns emerged in the essays. The characteristics from past research and evident patterns were objective and would cause little or no discrepancy when coding. However, a few of the essays contained elements that could have

included characteristics that were not easily distinguishable. At these points of contention, two additional coders would have been the ideal solution. The additional coders could have discussed the discrepancies and together they could have settled the disagreement, which would have been beneficial to the validity of the study. While I did take every precaution to remain objective and include characteristics that had minimal subjective qualities, researcher bias cannot be unacknowledged.

Additionally, a statistical data run was not employed for this study due to the large number of variables resulting in low cell points. While the low cell points did not render themselves to statistical analysis, the resulting numbers from this exploratory study led to insights and the creation of coding categories. Consequently, this study leads to replication.

Operational Definition and Coding Categories

The background research discussed in the second chapter provided an overall foundation for the analysis of this current study. The operational definition for analyzing the students' essays is based on a similar schema developed by David in her study of executives' rhetorical strategies. David's analysis of executives' texts in her study focused on the feminine aspects of content ("women's interests") and arrangement ("inductive"), choice of evidence ("narrative or personal experience"), language choice ("metaphorical"), and tone ("non-combative and co-operative") (158). Because David's schemata for analyzing executive rhetoric concentrated on the characteristics of feminine rhetoric, it proved to be a beneficial device for the current study.

Past researchers have declared that feminine rhetoric has distinct characteristics: language that is emotional; arrangement that is inductive, non-linear; evidence that is narrative, personal experience, or anecdotal; content that is related to women's issues;

syntactic construction that includes intensifiers, expressive forms, hyperbole, and possibilities (i.e., could, shall, I think, etc.); and a tone that is cooperative (explanation as opposed to argumentation) (Campbell; David; Key; Kramarae; Lakoff; Lunsford; Tannen). In opposition, masculine rhetoric is characterized by what is known as the traditional rhetoric: unemotional, linear, straightforward, logical, deductive, analytical, factual, active, aggressive, and competitive (David; Lakoff; Lunsford; Mills; Tannen; Ulary). To determine if feminine rhetoric exists in the college composition classroom, the students' essays were analyzed to determine what they wrote about and how they wrote about it. Using the above definitions, the essays were analyzed for the following specific characteristics: content (emotional topics or topics traditionally related to the female or traditionally related to the male); organization (deductive [thesis placement at the beginning] or inductive [development then generalization with delayed thesis]); evidence (narrative, personal experience, or analogies); and writing style (egalitarian, aggressive, intensifiers, emphasis, possibilities, or questions [in place of statements]). These factors were selected to determine if females (and/or males) are using characteristics researchers categorize as "feminine."

The first step began with analysis of the data for patterns based on four characteristics originating out of the definitions of female and male writing styles mentioned above: 1) Content: what type of topics did the students write about—emotional, traditional female or traditional male?; 2) Organization: what type of organizational patterns did the students follow—the traditional deductive (male characteristic), inductive (female characteristic), or another alternative pattern?; 3) Evidence: what type of evidence did the students use to validate their arguments—narrative, personal experience, analogies, examples, etc.?; and 4) Style: what were the specific stylistic differences between female and male texts—word

choice, construction, emphasis, expression, etc.? Additionally, the average length of each essay and the use of person was noted for comparison between females and males. Table 3.1 shows the coding categories and the origins of the categories. While most of the categories are from past research, I discovered additional patterns resulting in the categories added for this study. A closer observation of tables in chapter Four will show that not all of the characteristics listed in the coding categories were found in every essay. At the first reading, the gender of the writer was unknown. In the results tabulation, the gender of the individual essays was recorded to compare the patterns. The second step was to review the reflections and record what the students chose and why: topic, organization, evidence, and style. Lastly, the questionnaire results were reviewed and tabulated.

As I interpret and explain the data in the following chapters, I will utilize two perspectives of feminist theory: radical (sometimes called weak cultural) and postmodern. These two perspectives were chosen because I believe past research relating to feminine rhetoric is based on radical feminism and because some recent researchers are utilizing the postmodern feminist approach since the postmodern feminist approach does not emphasize separate gendered characteristics. Postmodern feminists will analyze the situation and use the appropriate characteristics to achieve their objective—the characteristics can be feminine, masculine, or a combination of both. The use of the term “feminine” in feminine rhetoric relates to the qualities and techniques “traditionally” attributed to women; the term “feminist” (term used with the various feminist approaches) is a theoretical approach used to

Table 3.1

Coding Categories for Essay Analysis

	Coding Categories	Source for Category
Content/Topic:	Women's interests (traditional) Men's Interests (traditional) Emotional	Campbell, David, Key, Lunsford Campbell, David, Key, Lunsford Campbell, David, Key, Lunsford
Organization:	Inductive (delayed thesis) Deductive (beginning thesis) Stronger at end Non-distinguishable thesis	Campbell, Cixous, David, Lunsford Campbell, Cixous, David, Lunsford Added for this study Added for this study
Evidence:	Analogies Examples Interviews Metaphors Narrative Opinion with Facts Opinion without Facts Outside sources (books, periodicals) Personal Experience Quotes Statistics Surveys Television World Wide Web	Campbell, David, Key, Lunsford Campbell, David, Key, Lunsford Added for this study Campbell, David, Key, Lunsford Campbell, David, Key, Lunsford Added for this study Added for this study Added for this study Campbell, David, Key, Lunsford Added for this study Campbell, David, Key, Lakoff, Lunsford, Urary Added for this study Added for this study Added for this study
Writing Style:	Straightforward prose Emotional prose Personal connection/experience Intensifiers Intensifiers 5+ and 10+ "Very" "A lot" Non-gendered language Possibility Uncertainty Emphasis and Emphasis 5+ Expletive Exclamatory Passive voice Questions Questions as attention getters Questions vs. Statements Questions as transitions Rhetorical Questions Sarcasm	David, Lakoff, Lunsford, Mills, Tannen, Urary Campbell, David, Key Campbell, David Campbell, David, Key, Lakoff, Tannen Campbell, David, Key, Lakoff, Tannen Added for this study Added for this study Key, Lakoff, Tannen Key, Lakoff, Tannen Campbell, David, Key, Lakoff, Tannen Added for this study Campbell, David, Key, Lakoff, Tannen Added for this study Key, Lakoff, Tannen Added for this study Added for this study Added for this study Added for this study Added for this study
Length of essay		Added for this study
Use of person		Added for this study

empower women through research and the use of language. Both the feminine and feminist definitions will guide my analysis of the data because they are components of the radical and postmodern feminist approaches. In totality, all components can offer valuable insight into the rhetoric occurring in the composition classroom.

FOUR

ANALYSIS

“...I shouldn’t be wondering at all in which case my analogies are pointless and probably wrong.”

Female Student, ISU English 105

“I want an ad to be blunt and to the point...”

Male Student, ISU English 105

My main objective in this study is to determine the difference, if any, between the writings of females and males in a college composition class via the discovery of feminine rhetoric. The results will help me answer the question stemming from the readings and comments of Bizzell and Herzberg and other prominent rhetoricians and researchers: Are there differences in female and male rhetoric? In the following chapter, I report the findings from the data analysis of student essays—four essay assignments given throughout the traditional 16-week semester—student reflections, and a questionnaire completed by the students of English 105, the second component of ISU’s First-Year Composition. First, I will briefly describe each essay and present the results highlighting the components distinguishing the rhetoric and characteristics between females and males. Next, I will continue the discussion with presentation of the reflection results highlighting the students’ reasons and justification for their writing processes. Finally, I will offer the results from the questionnaire emphasizing the areas of the questionnaire that address the gaps found in the empirical data.

Student Essays

As a requirement from the ISU First-Year Composition Program, each student must write 4,000-5,000 words or the equivalent of six to eight essays. The Department of English *Student's Guide to English 104-105* stipulates that the student's general goals are to "understand, identify, and use key conventions of academic writing (e.g., format, level of language, style, and documentation); construct different kinds of arguments that include logical, ethical, and emotional appeals; and write source papers analyzing a rhetorical situation and identifying and accurately documenting appropriate source material" (3). As research has shown, academic writing and constructing arguments are defined according to past traditions predominantly influenced by a patriarchal society. However, some past researchers have challenged the definitions precisely because of the dominant male influence. Continuing the challenge, the following analysis will investigate if new definitions should be written according to what students are *really* writing in the college classroom.

This study includes analysis of four of the five essays assigned during the 1999 spring semester. The first essay was an in-class essay and given prior to the beginning of the study; therefore, it is not included in the data. The remaining four essays constitute the data results (see Appendix D for Assignments 2-5). The four separate assignments from the two sections totaled 296 papers. The results are from 290 papers; six papers constituted dead research data because of missing pages from errant photocopying or unclear print resulting from low quality printers. The authentic setting of the classroom and actual student writing assignments provided a wealth of data to study the style and rhetoric of young women and men in a large Midwestern university.

Assignment #2: Analysis and Evaluation

The objective of the first essay under analysis was for the students to analyze and evaluate two articles printed in their class textbook.⁹ The students' tasks were to read, summarize, analyze the authors' positions, and evaluate which author provided the stronger argument. Other than instructions to summarize in their own words and provide evidence to justify their evaluation, the students were not given explicit directions on how to write or organize the essay. Because both articles the students analyzed were on drug legalization, content of the students' written essays was irrelevant to this first essay analysis. Additionally, because every student read and analyzed the same articles, evidence used to support their arguments was also irrelevant. Therefore, content and evidence were not analyzed for differences among females and males. Of particular consideration for this first essay were the features of organization, style, length, and person.

Organization. As previously mentioned, some researchers agree that one difference between female and male writing is the presence of inductive versus deductive organization, and one of the simplest ways to analyze this phenomenon is to determine where the thesis statement is placed. The thesis at the beginning (first or second paragraph) of an essay followed by development of the thesis may indicate a linear, straightforward presentation (male characteristic), whereas a delayed thesis or thesis appearing at the end (last paragraph) of an essay may indicate a collaborative stance offering all aspects of the issue before stating the author's own purpose/position (feminine characteristic). Table 4.1 presents the thesis placement results for the first essay. Of the seventeen total papers written by females

⁹ Ramage, John D. and John C. Bean. *Writing Arguments: A Rhetoric with Readings, Fourth Edition*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1998.

Table 4.1

Assignment #2: Analysis and Evaluation
Students' Placement of Thesis in Number and Percentage

	Female n=17		Male n=29	
	#	%	#	%
Beginning	5	29	10	35
End	6	35	5	17
Other	0	0	6	21
Attempt	2	12	3	10
Not Distinguishable	4	24	5	17

and twenty-nine total papers written by males, 29 percent of the women placed the thesis statements at the beginning compared to 35 percent of men who placed their thesis statements in the beginning paragraph. Thirty-five percent of the women placed the thesis statement in the final paragraph compared to 17 percent of the men.

An interesting fact to note is the placement of thesis in the position "other," which constituted placement in paragraphs other than the first and the last, usually prior to the concluding paragraph. Of the twenty-nine men, 21 percent placed their theses in this position. Essentially, an equal number of men had beginning and delayed thesis statements. Women, on the other hand, placed their theses either in the first or last paragraphs. Another important factor is the nondistinguishable theses and/or attempts at thesis statements. Thirty-five percent of the females did not have a clear thesis statement as did 17 percent of the males. For example, a student wrote: "While one solution seems a little more plausible to me, I still read both essays with an open mind, giving me a much better look at each authors *[sic]* view points." While this example demonstrates that the student attempts to write a thesis statement, it is not viewed as a clear position statement. Of note, this attempt was

located in the final paragraph; no distinguishable attempt appeared in any other paragraph. It appears that the author resisted making a judgment and suggests two possible conclusions: one, the author hesitates with a position due to lack of confidence, indecisiveness, or inexperience as a writer; or two, the author is displaying an objective stance seeing both positions and not stating a position to avoid bias by choosing one argument over the other.

In addition to thesis placement, overall organization did not differentiate significantly between females and males. In reality, among the total essays, there was minimal consistency in organization: 17 female writers exhibited nine different organizational patterns, and 29 male writers demonstrated eleven different organizational patterns. For example, four females organized their essays with a pattern consisting of summary and analysis of article one, summary and analysis of article two, and conclusion. Three male writers followed this same pattern. Another organizational pattern consisted of summary of one article, summary of the second article, analysis/comparison, and conclusion. Four women followed this pattern as did four men. The additional variety of patterns averaged two to four women and men following each particular pattern. The variety of organizational patterns made it difficult to categorize the data to make any significant conclusions regarding women's and men's differing organizational tendencies aside from inductive versus deductive inclination evident from the thesis placement.

Style. Due to the eclecticism and the individuality of each writer, tabulating the style of each essay was a daunting task. In order to investigate if differences existed between women and men, I began with a code list comprised of writing characteristics labeled as feminine or masculine speech according to past research. Writing characteristics fell into three major categories: type of prose, word choice, and style. Emotional prose including

feelings and emotional overtones, is characterized as feminine; whereas straightforward and direct prose “with its emphasis on vigorous and forceful prose...us[ing] active verbs and avoid[ing] weak modifiers and qualifiers” is characterized as a masculine trait (David 154). Word choices comprised of intensifiers (“ly-words,” and empty adjectives—“a lot,” “very,” “so”), possibilities (could, shall, I think, etc.), and uncertainty (similar to hedges in speech) are also feminine characteristics because women tend to use these rhetorical techniques to attract others to their writing—essentially, to get others to “listen” (Lakoff; Key; Tannen). Similar to tag questions in speech, question intonation was categorized as a feminine characteristic also. In analysis, any type of interrogative sentence (rhetorical, transitional, or in place of a declarative sentence) was noted. In relation to feminine rhetoric, however, special notation was made to questions used in place of declarative statements because of their suggestion of tentativeness (Key 69). The coding list for style also included emphasis (italics, underline, bold, etc.), exclamatory remarks, passive opposed to active voice, and sarcasm. The number of specific writing characteristics varied with each essay, but the basic coding categories remained constant. When coding the writers’ styles, I revisited the specific question: Do women and men write differently?

The style of the first essay analyzed did not offer strikingly different prose between females and males (see Table 4.2). Consistent with research, men used more straightforward prose (active verbs, clear syntax, evident topic sentences and transitions) and more expletive construction (“There are,” “It is” to begin sentences), suggesting an objective, third-person style. Women also followed typical feminine patterns suggested by researchers: use of questions, high amount of emphasis in single papers, and lower occurrence of straightforward prose.

Table 4.2

Assignment #2: Analysis and Evaluation

Students' Choice of Writing Characteristics in Number and Percentage

	Females n=17		Males n=29	
	#	%	#	%
Straightforward Prose	3	18	8	28
Emotional Prose	2	12	2	7
Personal Connection/Experience	2	12	3	10
Reasons: Facts	0	0	1	14
Reasons: Moral	2	12	4	14
Analogy	1	6	1	3
Description (vivid)	1	6	0	0
Intensifiers	7	41	10	35
Intensifiers 5+	1	6	2	7
Intensifiers 10+	0	0	2	7
Non-gendered language	0	0	1	3
Possibility	3	18	2	7
Sophisticated Language	0	0	2	7
Speaking tone/Slang	1	6	1	3
Uncertainty	2	12	4	14
Emphasis	2	12	3	10
Emphasis 5+	2	12	0	0
Expletive	6	35	10	35
Exclamatory	1	6	0	0
Passive Voice	1	6	6	21
Questioning	4	24	1	3
Questions vs. Statements	3	18	1	3
Questions as transitions	1	6	2	7
Rhetorical Questions	2	12	1	3
Sarcasm	2	12	2	7

While certain patterns followed what researchers have found in the past, certain elements contradicted what I had originally hypothesized, although the numbers are not statistically significant. Fewer women than expected used intensifiers (“very,” “highly,” “thoroughly,” “extreme”); 47 percent of the papers written by women had some intensifier usage compared to 49 percent of the essays authored by men. Women also demonstrated less uncertainty than men, yet used more questions as statements (i.e., “Isn’t this what we do to all drunk drivers”). In addition, women presented less evidence of passivity; less than 6

percent of the women (one woman) showed a passive voice in their writing compared to 21 percent of the men.

Length and Person. Researchers disagree on whether women or men are the more prolific writers, although all researchers are careful not to depict one gender as better than the other. In other words, more writing—longer essays—does not constitute a better writer. As a way to view the differences between the genders, I tabulated the lengths of the papers and calculated the average length for each essay authored by the individual gender. As Table 4.3 shows, the average length for papers written by each gender was almost identical: women's essays averaged 3.75 pages in length compared to 3.78 average pages for men.

Coding the essays for use of person was another technique to investigate if differences existed. The number of women and men writing in first person was close in percentage (29 percent of women compared to 28 percent of men). The majority of men wrote in third person and tabulated the largest margin over women (41 percent of men compared 29 percent of women).

Table 4.3

Assignment #2: Analysis and Evaluation
Length of Essay and Use of Person

	Female n=17		Male n=29	
	#	%	#	%
Length (Avg. Pages)	3.75	NA	3.78	NA
First Person	5	29	8	28
Second Person	1	6	0	0
Third Person	5	29	12	41
First and Second Person	0	0	0	0
Second and Third Person	0	0	1	3
Third and First	6	35	8	28

Assignment #3: Rhetorical Analysis

The objective for the second essay under analysis was for the students to analyze a text and/or medium of discourse. They could choose an article, editorial, magazine, magazine advertisements, or television advertisements. The students had to analyze the purpose, audience, and context of the medium. Because this essay was intended to give students some individual autonomy in choice of medium and structural choice, few instructions were given with the exception “to focus your analysis in a clear manner” (see Appendix D). Similar to the first essay, coding each essay involved analyzing organization, writing style, length, and person. In addition, content—the topic of the advertisement and medium chosen—was also considered in this analysis because research has shown that women tend to write about topics relating to the traditional feminine issues (family, children, health, beauty, etc.) just as men investigate topics that relate to traditional masculinity (sports, automobiles, outdoors, etc.).

Content. Table 4.4 illustrates the tabulated results for topic choice. Not surprisingly, women and men chose topics related to the traditional feminine or masculine norms: 17 percent of men wrote about automobiles with no women writing on this topic; similarly, but somewhat unexpected knowing how women’s athletics are becoming more visible, 17 percent of the men wrote about sports with no women writing on this topic; and 3 percent of the men (one man) wrote about health and beauty compared to 24 percent of the women. Even when the one man did choose a topic within the category of health and beauty, his advertisement was Irish Spring Sport, a deodorant soap “for someone that is constantly pushing his/her body to the outer limits...in physical activity.” Two topics that are not necessarily related to gender preference are alcohol/tobacco and entertainment, yet more men

Table 4.4

Assignment #3 Rhetorical Analysis
Students' Choice of Topics in Number and Percentage

	Females n=17		Males n=29	
	#	%	#	%
Alcohol/Tobacco	1	6	5	17
Automobiles	0	0	5	17
Entertainment	1	6	4	14
Fashion	1	6	0	0
Food	2	12	0	0
Health and Beauty	4	24	1	3
Magazines	2	12	1	3
Sports	0	0	5	18
Other	6	34	8	28

wrote essays on these topics. The two women who did choose these topics analyzed an advertisement for Bacardi Rum (“because rum is what women drink”) and television commercials during the Grammy Awards. Men, in comparison, wrote on alcohol advertisements in *Playboy* and *Esquire*, Swisher Sweets in *Car and Driver*, and television commercials during a basketball game and the Super Bowl.

The numbers of women and men who chose a particular type of medium did not differ in remarkable ways (see Table 4.5). For example, 88 percent of the women who chose magazines is somewhat similar to the 66 percent of the men who chose magazines. While the numbers may be close, the *type* of magazine distinguishes female and male interests. Overwhelmingly, women chose what society deems as “women’s magazines”: *Bazaar*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Glamour*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Seventeen*, *Mademoiselle*, and *Maxim*. Only two women strayed from the traditional female magazines, using *National Geographic* and *Fortune*. In direct opposition to women but fitting the societal stereotype of the “guy magazine,” men chose *Car and Driver*, *Esquire*, *Men’s Fitness*, *Muscle Fitness*,

Table 4.5

Assignment #3 Rhetorical Analysis
Students' Choice of Medium in Number and Percentage

	Females n=17		Males n=29	
	#	%	#	%
Television	1	6	8	28
Newspaper	1	6	1	3
Magazine	15	88	19	66
Other	0	0	1	3

Playboy, Road and Track, Runner's World, Slam (basketball), Sports Illustrated, and Wakeboarding. Other male choices included magazines that are not necessarily gender specific, *Time* and *Newsweek*, but no women chose these particular magazines.

Organization. At this level of education, most students would have had at least four years of English education, whether in high school or previous college courses. In turn, one could presume that the students would have had some previous instruction on organizing compositions, essays, and conventional writing genres.¹⁰ Therefore, the students were not given explicit instructions on how to organize their writing, as with all of the English assignments given to the participants of this study. This teaching philosophy is my own and stems from my belief that students need autonomy to not only be successful in writing, but to enjoy it as well. Fortunately, this philosophy also complements this study because students could write without my specifications, in turn allowing for fewer response effects.

Using the thesis placement as an indicator for organizational patterns, the analysis shows that students demonstrated more traditional organizational patterns than they used in

¹⁰ Having completed a certified educational program as an undergraduate and being an educator with teaching experience at the middle school, high school, and college level, I feel confident to make this assumption.

the previous essay (Table 4.6). Of the seventeen female writers, 70 percent placed the thesis statement in the opening paragraph. Of the twenty-nine males, 66 percent also placed the thesis at the beginning. Interestingly though, four of the nineteen males (14 percent) who had their thesis in the opening paragraph had clearer, more explicit statements, which would have made better thesis statements, at the end of their essays. Furthermore, 17 percent of the men clearly had their thesis statements at the end of the essay—an indication of inductive organization (a feminine trait)—compared to only one female (6 percent). An additional discovery in the analysis of the second essay was the dominant pattern of the classic five-paragraph essay—a traditional organizational pattern.¹¹ Following what one might expect from past research, the results show that the writing of 21 percent of the males resembled the classic five-paragraph essay. Eighteen percent of the women also organized their essays following this pattern. Although the small numbers may seem insignificant, the mere fact

Table 4.6

Assignment #3 Rhetorical Analysis
Students' Placement of Thesis in Number and Percentage

	Female n=17		Male n=29	
	#	%	#	%
Beginning	12	70	19	66
End	1	6	5	17
Other	2	12	0	0
Attempt	1	6	3	10
Not distinguishable	1	6	2	7
Stronger at end	1	6	4	14

¹¹ The five-paragraph essay consists of an introductory paragraph, three-paragraph body, and a concluding paragraph. Most often the thesis ends the opening paragraph stating the three points the writer will present in the body of the written composition, the organization is deductive, and ends with a clear conclusion. The classic five-paragraph essay corresponds with the style of male rhetoric.

that there is *some* evidence that women and men write differently at times and at other times they show evidence of similarities is noteworthy.

Style. Because the essay assignment allowed for student choice, the topics varied as did the descriptions, word choice, and style of the individual writers. Table 4.7 on the following page presents results similar to the first essay; the numbers are not outwardly indicative of major differences. Consistent with research that men write objectively and concretely, male writers used straightforward prose (17 percent), expletives (45 percent), and incorporated descriptive language (“propagandist,” “narrates,” “utilizes animated sound and vision”) in their prose more than women. However, men also demonstrated the use of emotional prose (17 percent), personal connections (10 percent), intensifiers (17 percent), empty adjectives (“very,” “a lot”), possibilities (“I think,” “probably,” “it may be possible”), and passivity—all characteristics typified as feminine. In contrast, women did not exhibit the rhetorical style typifying male characteristics, with the exception of 41 percent of women using expletives. Women did, however, follow the traits characterized as feminine: 47 percent of the women used intensifiers (“great,” “extremely,” “desperately”) compared to 17 percent of men; women used words indicating possibility (“perhaps,” “may,” “might,” “looks as though”); and women also demonstrated passivity in their style (18 percent).

The coding list and table (Table 4.7) provide a valuable tool for comparison in a structured format, but what the table cannot depict is the eclectic descriptions and word choice that truly distinguished the two genders. Female and male writers perpetuated the gender stereotype created by the patriarchal society. Women writers confirmed Key’s findings (69) and used words that revolved around beauty, feminine characteristics, and

Table 4.7

Assignment #3 Rhetorical Analysis
Students' Choice of Writing Characteristics in Number and Percentage

	Female n=17		Males n=29	
	#	%	#	%
Straightforward Prose	0	0	5	17
Emotional Prose	0	0	5	17
Personal Connection/Experience	1	6	3	10
Analogy	1	6	0	0
Intensifiers	7	41	5	17
Intensifiers 5+	1	6	0	0
Intensifiers 10+	0	0	0	0
"Very" "A lot"	6	35	6	21
Possibility	6	35	5	17
Uncertainty	1	6	0	0
Emphasis	2	12	2	7
Emphasis 5+	1	6	1	3
Expletive	7	41	13	45
Exclamatory	1	6	1	3
Passive Voice	3	18	5	17
Questions	2	12	3	10
Questions vs. Statements	2	12	0	0
Questions as transitions	0	0	0	0
Rhetorical Questions	2	12	2	7
Sarcasm	0	0	0	0

implied nonaggressiveness: "cuteness," "gentle," "calm," "delicate," "pleasant," "peace."

Female writers described women as "porcelain dolls, too delicate to touch," "provocative,"

and "love feeling sensuous and attractive." The female writers also viewed women's

purposes in life as the male tradition has. Instead of seeing the male dominance of society

and the sexual stereotypes it perpetuates, one female writer wrote, "The purpose of this

magazine is to attract young women to look at the beautiful women in advertisements and go

out and purchase the new make-up, perfume, or shoes, giving them the hope of looking just a

[sic] glamorous." The lack of confidence displayed by women in women's writing was

evident as a female wrote, "I shouldn't be wondering at all in which my analogies are

pointless and probably wrong.” In contrast, male writers displayed characteristics of their self-assurance.

Male writers followed what researchers deem as aggressive language—language that is bold, denoting power and action. Most often, men used words relating to sports: “aggressive,” “soaring,” “competitive,” “athletic-looking,” and “powerful slam.” Male writers described men as “subjects,” “handsome with bulging biceps,” and “athletic and competitive.” Like the female writers, men also perpetuated gender stereotypes in their language:

The audience is men and only men. No woman would want their man to be looking at this anyway [*Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue]. Men are the ones who read and look at *SI*.

.....
Of course being male, cars are a natural appeal to me. To some men this does not. To some women cars are appealing, to most they are not [*sic*].

.....
Football is mainly watched by men.

In addition to the stereotypes portrayed, gendered language was also evident in essays authored by men: sportsmen, businessmen, “the guys,” and “he” versus the use of “she/he” or another nongendered alternative.

Lastly, the word “beautiful” was used in different contexts for women and men. To women, beauty was soft skin, silky hair, dolls, scenery, and people. To men, beauty was a “gold-shimmering car,” a road in a sports car advertisement, and women. Women used words such as “bright,” “flashy,” and “wonderful” to describe people; those same words were used by men to describe cars. A female writer described a car as an “athletic, stable, and strong vehicle.” Men described cars as “powerful to get you all up and salivating” and

with “immaculate leather interior—a wonderful utopia.” In the few examples in the essays, each gender described cars in terms of the opposite gender.

Length and Person. Comparable to the first essay, the average length of the papers was fairly equal (see Table 4.8): women averaged 2.79 pages, and men averaged 2.62 pages. Contrary to the first essay, more women than men (in respect to the total number of papers) used the third person objective in their writing. Men also wrote in the third person but an almost equal number wrote in the first person. Thirty-one percent of the men wrote in the first person as opposed to only 18 percent of the women. Interestingly, 28 percent of the male writers wrote in dual voices compared to 12 percent of the women.

Table 4.8

Assignment #3: Rhetorical Analysis
Length of Essay and Use of Person

	Female n=17		Male n=29	
	#	%	#	%
Length (Avg. Pages)	2.79	NA	2.62	NA
First Person	3	18	9	31
Second Person	1	6	0	0
Third Person	11	64	12	41
First and Second Person	0	0	3	11
Second and Third Person	1	6	1	3
Third and First	1	6	4	14

Assignment #4: Rogerian Argument

The Rogerian argument is an alternative strategy to the classical argument. Named after the psychologist Carl Rogers, the “Rogerian argument emphasizes ‘empathetic listening,’ which Rogers defined as the ability to see an issue sympathetically from another

person's perspective" (Ramage and Bean 183). The purpose of assigning this essay in English 105 was to give students the experience of using an alternative strategy in writing. The objective of the third essay analyzed was for each writer to develop an essay that addressed a controversial topic—a topic that might be out of the writer's comfort zone—and delay her/his position until the end of the essay—something that may be difficult for bold or aggressive writers. As noted from previous research and from the description above, the Rogerian argument has characteristics resembling characteristics of feminine rhetoric: delayed thesis; nonthreatening, nonaggressive position; and use of compromise. This alternative writing strategy proved essential for this study because it presented an avenue for all writers to attempt a different writing strategy, possibly one they had never tried before. Analysis of the topic choice, organization, and word choice could prove to be critical in distinguishing the differences between female and male writers. For the first time in the class, the students were given instructions on the type of topic and the audience (the audience should resist the author's viewpoint) but were not given a specific issue or information on how to organize the essay. Whether the students followed the designated pattern or demonstrated a "personal writing style" was the major point of investigation.

Content. The instructions for this essay were to "choose a topic in which you address an audience that has strong psychological or emotional resistance to your position" (Ramage and Bean 188; also see Appendix D). I originally hypothesized that both women and men would choose topics surrounding societal issues currently under debate: abortion, gay rights, diversity issues, and similar issues regarding individual rights. I also hypothesized that the female writers would not stray from the traditional feminine issues and men would choose

Table 4.9

Assignment #4: Rogerian Argument
Students' Choice of Topic in Number and Percentage

	Females n=17		Male n=31	
	#	%	#	%
Alcohol	0	0	1	3
Animal	0	0	2	6
Children/Family	3	18	0	0
Laws	3	18	8	26
Marriage	2	12	0	0
Medicine	3	18	6	19
Science	2	12	2	6
Sports	1	5	8	26
Women's Health	1	5	1	3
Other	2	12	3	10

topics differing from the traditional masculine issues. Table 4.9 designates the major categories and corresponding numbers of the individual topics chosen.

As depicted in Table 4.9, women writers continued to write on topics affecting women, as expected; interestingly, men did stray from masculine topics. Of the 17 women, 18 percent (three women) wrote about medical topics (which the abortion issue was coded) that included euthanasia and diet plans. Surprisingly, no female writer wrote about abortion. Males registered 19 percent (six men) of writers with topics in the medicine category, two of them discussing abortion and four discussing euthanasia. Thirty percent of the females discussed topics related to children/family and marriage, but no males wrote on topics relating to this category. Male writers, keeping with the traditional masculine topics, chose sports-related topics that appear controversial to the certain sector interested in or knowledgeable of the topic chosen; those who are uninterested or do not know the pertinent details may not find the issue controversial. Male writers discussed topics ranging from

professional athlete salaries and baseball hall of fame inductees to dove hunting and snowmobile traction aides. In comparison, only one female (5 percent of the total) wrote about sports, and the topic was children in sports (which could have also been coded under children and families). The last significant difference occurred with the category of law. Eighteen percent of the women wrote about laws against gay parents, privacy issues (locker searches), and capital punishment (immoral, inhumane). Male authors, 26 percent, wrote about laws involving hate crimes, limiting immigration, proposing English only, raising the speed limit, hog confinements, sales taxes, and censorship. Overall, women chose topics relating to humanity or efforts that affect smaller, personal sectors of people; one could say that the topics females discussed were personal applied to the legal and social issues that affect other individuals. I cannot presume that the male topics do not relate to the individual, most of the topics chosen by men seem to have more to do with business and large, commercial establishments rather than the moral or ethical responsibilities of the individual.

Organization. Organization of the Rogerian argument is different from the classic or traditional argument format. Consistent with the other essay analyses, coding of the essays included thesis placement; however, according to the Rogerian strategy, the thesis statement should have been in the last paragraph or near the end. For this reason, I expected to find most theses in the last, second to last, or third to last paragraphs. In accordance with past research, I expected to find more women following this pattern and more men wavering from the pattern. Table 4.10 on the following page shows that while most women, 65 percent, did place the thesis in the ending paragraphs, 18 percent placed the thesis in the opening paragraph. Additionally, one female writer (6 percent) had a clear attempt at a thesis in the first paragraph; in other words, the writer's position was clear in the opening paragraph.

Male writers overwhelmingly placed the thesis in the final paragraphs, 84 percent. One male writer (3 percent) placed his thesis in the first paragraph, and an additional two men (6 percent) stated their position in the opening paragraph.

Because the Rogerian argument differs from the traditional arguments most students are taught, it was important to analyze how many students followed the organization strategy (see Table 4.10). Furthermore, since one of the main concepts of the Rogerian strategy is for the writer to compromise, the essays were reviewed for evidence of a clearly designated compromise in the writing.¹² Of the female writers, 29 percent followed the exact pattern designated in the textbook, complete with four paragraphs. Twenty-four percent of the female writers demonstrated a variation of the pattern that included using more or fewer paragraphs. One female writer did not follow the pattern; in fact, she presented a traditional five-paragraph essay (following the traditional argument style). Of the seventeen female

Table 4.10

Assignment #4: Rogerian Strategy
Students' Placement of Thesis in Number and Percentage

	Female n=17		Male n=31	
	#	%	#	%
First Paragraph	3	18	1	3
6 th to last paragraph	0	0	0	0
5 th to last paragraph	0	0	0	0
4 th to last paragraph	1	6	1	3
3 rd to last paragraph	2	12	3	10
2 nd to last paragraph	3	13	10	32
Last Paragraph	6	35	13	42
Attempt in first	1	6	2	6
Not distinguishable	1	6	1	3
Follow Pattern	5	29	4	13
Compromise Evident	8	47	11	35

¹² I deemed a "clearly designated compromise" evident if the writer gave both sides of the issue and offered a compromise of the two possible positions.

writers, 47 percent offered clear evidence of a compromise, whereas 12 percent offered no compromise at all. In comparison, 13 percent of the male writers followed the pattern in the textbook, and 23 percent presented a variation of the pattern. A total of 24 percent of the male writers did not follow the Rogerian strategy: 10 percent did not present the opposing viewpoints, and 3 percent presented a five-paragraph essay. Of the thirty-one male authors, 35 percent proposed clear compromises; 6 percent of the males did not propose any compromise in their respective essays.

Evidence. Unlike the first and second essays analyzed, the writers needed to include evidence to argue their positions in the Rogerian argument. Evidence in the first essay was irrelevant because every student used the same articles. Evidence in the second essay was also irrelevant because each rhetorical analysis was different, and the evidence used was the topic or medium chosen and was coded in that manner. For the Rogerian argument (and the forthcoming discussion of the fifth essay), evidence presented by the students was tabulated to distinguish if there are differences between what female and male writers use as evidence to support their respective positions. Past research notes that females tend to use personal experience, narrative, anecdotes, and humor as evidence and devices to enhance the evidence (Campbell; David; Key). Using the past research as a beginning, I established a code list including the above with any additional categories recognized as I analyzed the essays. As Table 4.11 shows, more female (41 percent) than male (23 percent) students generally used personal experience to support their respective positions. Sixteen percent of the males offered examples as support compared to 12 percent of the women. Contrary to past research, the evidence that women tend to use such as narrative, metaphors, and analogies was not used by the students participating in the study.

Table 4.11

Assignment #4: Rogerian Strategy
Evidence Used by Students in Number and Percentage

	Females n=17		Males n=31	
	#	%	#	%
Analogy	1	6	0	0
Examples	2	12	5	16
Metaphor	1	6	0	0
Narrative	1	6	2	6
Opinion with Facts	0	0	0	0
Opinion without Facts	0	0	2	6
Personal Experience	7	41	7	23
Statistics	1	6	0	0

Style. Consistent with the analysis of the essays above, the coding list used to examine students' stylistic tendencies was based on characteristics the researchers define as feminine. From this stance, I hypothesized that the number of women exhibiting the feminine characteristics would be higher than the number of men in the appropriate categories; however, the results for this essay contradicted my hypothesis. Table 4.12 below illustrates the complete results. For example, women have been known to use more intensifiers and empty adverbs, yet evidence from the essays shows the opposite: 32 percent of the men used intensifiers compared to 29 percent women, and 23 percent of men used "very" and "a lot" while only 12 percent of women used these empty adverbs. The difference in percentage bears noting because the data contradict past research and suggest that men are demonstrating more evidence of feminine characteristics than women are.

In addition, past research suggests that women use more words demonstrating possibility or uncertainty. Again, the results of this analysis contradicts former research (see Table 4.12). Of the men, 23 percent used words denoting possibility or uncertainty—

Table 4.12

Assignment #4: Rogerian Strategy
Students' Choice of Writing Characteristics in Number and Percentage

	Females n=17		Males n=31	
	#	%	#	%
Straightforward Prose	2	12	4	13
Emotional Prose	2	12	2	6
Personal Connection/Experience	7	41	7	23
Intensifiers	5	29	10	32
Intensifiers 5+	0	0	0	0
Intensifiers 10+	0	0	0	0
"Very" "A lot"	2	12	7	23
Non-gendered language	3	18	3	10
Possibility	3	19	7	23
Uncertainty	2	12	1	3
Emphasis	2	12	3	10
Emphasis 5+	2	12	0	0
Expletive	6	35	18	58
Exclamatory	1	6	0	0
Passive Voice	1	6	2	6
Questions	1	6	3	10
Questions vs. Statements	3	18	4	13
Questions as transitions	0	0	2	6
Rhetorical Questions	1	6	1	3
Sarcasm	0	0	2	6

"supposedly," "maybe," "seem," "probably," "hopefully"—compared to 19 percent of the women. One other notable difference is the use of questions. Although the numbers for usage by women and men are almost equal (30 percent for women, 32 percent for men), the men's use of this characteristic more often than women's differs from the first and second essays in this study.

Unlike the categories above that denoted peculiarity in the data, one other category deserves notation because it confirms previous research and remains consistent to the data from the above essays. Fifty-eight percent of the male writers used expletives in their

writing. Over 50 percent usage is something worth mentioning, especially in comparison to the 35 percent of women who used expletives.

Similar to the analysis of the second essay, the analysis of the third essay resulted in consistent use of writing characteristics among the participants; however, the more indicative results stem from the students' actual word choice and descriptions. The students' objective in this essay was to address an audience who is hostile toward the subject; therefore, egalitarian stances and emphasis on common ground as opposed to emphasis on issues that may attack personal values were expected. While some word choice differed between female and male writers, overall there was little difference among the essays. The majority of women and men remained egalitarian: women wrote of "gender equity," and men emphasized "unity," "desegregation," and "equality." Of course, there were women and men who did not write in a nongendered fashion: a female writer described women as "gold diggers" and men as "scam artists," creating an unnecessary generalization; and a male author wrote, "For as long as man has treaded the earth..." and continued to use "man" and "his" throughout his essay. In addition to males' high use of intensifiers (see above), men used more vivid description and emotional appeal than did women:

physicians...slaughtered in cold blood [abortion]

 creating a holocaust is downright intolerable [Kosovo]

 bloody end for Albanians would be certain [Kosovo]

 methodically devastate entire towns and villages [Serbian Forces]

 exuberant price tag...grandeur of the trail [environment]

 I urge all people with a heart and strong mind [abortion]

Even though women discussed some of the same topics as men from which the above quotations derive, women used a different kind of description and emotion. Men discussed war and the brutality of violence, whereas women focused on the topics from a caring, loving, and humane perspective.

Length and Person. As Table 4.13 shows, women and men wrote essays of equal length. Women and men averaged 2.5 pages and 2.28 pages, respectively. The majority of women writers spoke in first person, 47 percent, slightly higher than the 32 percent of men. Only 18 percent of the women spoke in the third person, which when compared to 35 percent of the men is a notable difference. However, this is not necessarily surprising since research has pointed out that men are more inclined to use third person than women are.

Table 4.13

Assignment #4: Rogerian Strategy
Length of Essay and Use of Person in Number and Percentage

	Female n=17		Male n=31	
	#	%	#	%
Length (Avg. Pages)	2.5	NA	2.28	NA
First Person	8	47	10	32
Second Person	0	0	1	3
Third Person	3	18	11	35
First and Second Person	1	6	2	2
Second and Third Person	0	0	1	3
Third and First	5	29	6	19

Assignment #5: Final Research

The last essay analyzed was the final essay assigned to the students that constituted their “major paper” for the semester (see Appendix D). The students were allowed to choose their own topic, audience, and the type of strategy to use for their argument. This essay was research-based, and each student was asked to have evidence from a minimum of five sources. The objective of this essay was to demonstrate the students’ writing abilities and knowledge gained throughout the semester. The essay would also prove beneficial to this study because it offered students’ compositions in a common setting, and it allowed the students autonomy to choose which style they preferred. In turn, their written work would include very different styles of argumentation—a masculine style (the classic argument) and a feminine style (delayed thesis or Rogerian). Because this final essay combined all the aspects of writing, all four characteristics were considered for patterns: content, organization, evidence, and style.

Content. As previously mentioned, past researchers point out that women tend to choose topics specifically addressing women’s issues; in other words, women writers write on topics that primarily affect women. Men, on the other hand, have not established a set of topics or issues on which they normally write. Living in a patriarchal society where the majority of past research and theories have been dominated and controlled by men, men have had the privilege of writing on whatever topic they choose without controversy or stigma (perhaps with the exception of feminist issues in which men are still under scrutiny). Table 4.14 illustrates that topic choice among the participants of this study did not offer opposing results nor did the results differ widely from past research. Female writers’ topics

Table 4.14

Assignment #5: Final Research Essay
Students' Choice of Topic in Number and Percentage

	Females n=17		Males n=31	
	#	%	#	%
Alcohol/Tobacco/Drugs	0	0	3	10
Automobiles	0	0	3	10
Children/Family	3	18	2	6
Civil Rights	1	6	3	10
Current Events	2	12	3	10
Environment	1	6	1	3
Health	2	11	1	3
Laws	0	0	3	10
Science/ Medicine	3	18	3	10
Sports	0	0	5	16
Women's Health	2	12	0	0
Other	3	18	4	12

centered on children (Ritalin benefits, adoption, spanking), science and medicine (euthanasia, alternative medicine), general health (sleep deprivation), women's issues (surrogacy, rape), civil rights, and environment. Male writers chose topics related to the categories above with the additions of alcohol/tobacco, automobiles, sports, and laws. A noteworthy discovery is that the men wrote on the same topics as women, with the exception of women's issues, but the women did not write on topics relating to the additional topics written on by men.

Organization. The coding of the organizational patterns for this final essay was identical to the other essays beginning with thesis placement. What made this essay analysis different from the others, though, is that the writers had the choice of argument to use and should have had the knowledge of where the thesis should be placed and the proper organizational format for the respective arguments. Therefore, in this analysis, the placement of the thesis could be compared to the argument chosen. In addition, in interpreting the data,

I will agree the reasons why the writers chose the argument they did will be given in the reflections they wrote. (Further discussion regarding this element will commence in the discussion of the reflections.) Table 4.15 includes the results from the students' placements of theses and argument choices. From past research and teaching practices, it was not

Table 4.15

Assignment #5: Final Research Essay
Students' Placement of Thesis in Number and Percentage

	Female n=17		Male n=31	
	#	%	#	%
Beginning	8	47	15	48
End	5	29	9	29
Other	1	6	3	10
Attempt	3	18	0	0
Stronger at end	2	12	0	0
Not distinguishable	0	0	4	13
Choice: Classic	11	65	21	68
Choice: Rogerian	5	29	6	19
No Choice	1	6	4	13

surprising that more of the participants, males and females, placed their thesis statement in the opening paragraph: 47 percent of the 17 females and 48 percent of the 31 males placed theses in the opening paragraphs.

Some students exhibited alternative formats for their final papers. Twenty percent of women and 29 percent of men placed their theses at the end of their essays, and 6 percent of women (one woman) and 10 percent of men (three men) had delayed thesis statements. However, what was most peculiar about the delayed thesis placement was the choice of argument. For one of the female writers who chose the Rogerian strategy, the delayed thesis

placement was expected. However, the three males whose thesis statements were delayed chose the classic argument; instead of presenting their position in the opening paragraph, the authors forecasted what the essay would be about. In fact, two of the nine males (22 percent) who had their thesis at the end of their essay chose the classic argument. Putting these two elements together, I questioned the reason for this discrepancy. Is it the male's inclination to write inductively, or are the inexperienced writers struggling with thesis statements and the placement of them? Originally, the hypothesis was that the majority of the participants, especially the men, would choose the classic argument because it is familiar. This hypothesis proved factual as 65 percent of the women chose the classic argument as did 68 percent of the men. Of the women, 29 percent chose the Rogerian strategy as did 19 percent of the men; 6 percent of women (one female) and 13 percent of men (four males) did not designate a choice.

Evidence. As a research-based essay, each student was required to have five sources as evidence to support her/his position. In other words, the essay could not be based on opinion alone. As mentioned above, the students were able to choose what type of evidence they used but were required to have at least three different types. The coding categories expanded from the analysis of the other essays because students also used expert sources (journals, books, professionals, etc.) as well as personal experience and examples (see Table 4.16 for the evidence tabulation).

While all evidence illustrated below is noteworthy, certain elements deserve extra attention. Because past researchers point out that female writers tend to use analogy, narrative, and personal experience as evidence more than men do, these characteristics

Table 4.16

Assignment #5: Final Research Essay
Evidence Used by Students in Number and Percentage

	Females n=17		Males n=31	
	#	%	#	%
Academic Journals	1	6	1	3
Analogy	1	6	5	16
Books	6	35	7	23
Examples	2	12	10	32
Facts	4	24	3	10
Interviews	3	18	2	6
Magazines	1	6	6	19
Metaphor	0	0	2	6
Narrative	3	18	6	19
Newspaper	1	6	4	13
Opinions with Facts	-	-	-	-
Opinions without Facts	0	0	1	3
Personal Experience	6	6	5	6
Quotes	1	12	7	23
Statistics	2	6	11	35
Surveys	1	6	1	3
Television	1	6	4	13
World Wide Web	7	41	18	58

were expected to be used by more female writers than male writers. However, results from this study suggest that only personal experience was used by more women. Contrary to research, 19 percent of men used “narrative” and 16 percent of men used “analogies” as evidence compared to 18 percent and 6 percent of women in each category. Other differences in evidence use were “examples,” “statistics,” and the World Wide Web; all three registered higher numbers for male writers. Since the masculine tradition praises the objective stance, the use of “statistics” is not surprising. The “examples” usage is unexpected as women tend to use examples to connect with their audience. The overwhelming usage of the Internet by men also brings an interesting phenomenon into the study. This result may have an implication for future research about women and technology.

Style. Similar to the analysis of the Rogerian argument, the final essay was coded for style based on feminine characteristics. Again, like the other analyses, past researchers have determined that women demonstrate a writing style that is different from a masculine style of rhetoric. Therefore, I was somewhat surprised when I consolidated the results and found that the numbers distinguishing women and men were not drastically different as shown in Table 4.17. Two stylistic characteristics occurring most often were the use of intensifiers (a

Table 4.17

Assignment #5: Final Research Essay
Students' Choice of Writing Characteristics in Number and Percentage

	Females n=17		Males n=31	
	#	%	#	%
Straightforward Prose	1	6	5	16
Emotional Prose	4	24	3	10
Personal Connection/Experience	2	12	3	10
Intensifiers	12	71	13	42
Intensifiers 5+	0	0	1	3
Intensifiers 10+	0	0	0	0
"Very" "A lot"	5	29	3	10
Non-gendered language	1	6	0	0
Possibility	5	29	5	16
Uncertainty	1	6	0	0
Emphasis	3	18	7	23
Emphasis 5+	0	0	0	0
Expletive	16	94	20	65
Exclamatory	4	24	3	10
Passive Voice	3	18	0	0
Questions	1	6	6	19
Questions as attention getters	0	0	3	10
Questions vs. Statements	4	24	4	13
Questions as transitions	2	12	7	23
Rhetorical Questions	1	6	6	19
Sarcasm	0	0	4	13

feminine characteristic) and expletives (a characteristic used by a higher percentage of men in this study): 70 percent of female writers (twelve) demonstrated the use of intensifiers as did 41 percent of male writers (thirteen). The type of intensifiers used by females and males did not differ and consisted mostly of “ly-words”: “vigorously,” “exponentially,” “considerably,” “highly,” “widely,” “extremely,” “undoubtedly,” “totally,” “urgently,” and “definitely.” Students used fewer empty adverbs (“very,” “a lot”) in this essay, although women registered a higher use. Women’s use of expletives greatly increased from the previous essays. Sixteen of seventeen female writers, 94 percent, demonstrated some use of expletives (“there is,” “it is”). Male application of expletive in their prose remained consistent with the last essay; twenty of thirty-one males, 64 percent, used expletives in their essays.

Whereas expletives seemed to be used by more men in this study (and considered an indication of an objective stance and therefore a masculine characteristic), questions, which were initially deemed a feminine characteristic, were used by more males overall: seventy percent of the males used a variety of questioning in their writing; in comparison, 47 percent of the women used questioning techniques. While men used more questions overall, women and men equally used questions in place of statements; in other words, the straightforward statement could have been written where the question was written, but the writer wrote her/his thought in the form of a question. For women, this number is significant because they are said to be less aggressive and less confident in their writing. Putting a thought in the form of a question allows for less force by the writer, which in turn can be seen as indecisive or lacking certainty.

Similar to the analyses of the previous essays, word choice made by individual students does not necessarily fit into neat categories. The differences in word choice provide notable differences between males and females. For example, men used sarcasm in their writing: when describing the core curriculum in a high school, a male student wrote, “a little more than preposterous.” In comparison, no females showed any evidence of sarcasm. Another noticeable difference was male writers’ aggressive word choice: “will,” “must,” “act decisively...with authority,” and “There is no way the American public will put up with...” Women, on the other hand, demonstrated a personal tone: “I understand,” “I see their side, but...,” and “I would like to share some information...” When women used words such as “beautiful,” “so great,” “victimized,” “innocent,” and “morality,” men were using words such as “porous,” “disastrous,” “burly,” and “blazing speed and superb handling.”

One last noteworthy stylistic difference was the use metaphors by men. In an essay describing schools diminishing student creativity, schools were “factories” and students were “apathetic zombitrons”. Another male student wrote, “Imposing taxes now would be like choking a baby in a cradle.” While both a female and male student wrote about the environment, a male student described a coral reef as a “deathbed of broken-off coral and suffocating marine life.” The vivid description by males contradicted what the original expectations were prior to the analysis.

Length and Person.

From my own writing experience in education and experience with students, the hypothesis was that women would write longer essays than men. Consistently, as Table 4.18 illustrates, women and men have averaged almost identical length for essays, and this final essay was not an exception. Even as the average length remained consistent, the tendency to

speak in first person did not. Both females and males speaking in third person increased from the previous analyses; almost 50 percent of the female participants and over 50 percent of the male participants wrote in the third person. Although the numbers are not overwhelming, the numbers of male writers who wrote using second person in combination

Table 4.18

Assignment #5: Final Research Essay
Length of Essay and Use of Person

	Female n=17		Male n=31	
	#	%	#	%
Length (Avg. Pages)	5.36	NA	5.3	NA
First Person	6	35	4	13
Second Person	0	0	0	0
Third Person	8	47	18	58
First and Second Person	0	0	2	6
Second and Third Person	0	0	2	6
Third and First	3	18	5	16

with first or third person are worth mentioning. Twelve percent of the men used some form of “you” in their written prose compared to no women. If we equate “you” with informal speech, the absence of “you” in women’s writing confirms the research by Trudgill that points out that women demonstrate formal language usage in societal contexts more than men (183).

Reflections

The reflection written by the students had a dual purpose. First, the reflections were a way for the students to complete a final analysis and evaluation of their writing as they progressed through the semester and into their future college years. Secondly, the reflections

provided additional data for the study; the reflection was designed to provide data that may have gone undetected in analysis. The students' responses to their own rhetorical choices helped answer the never-ending question, "Why?" The objective of the final reflection was for the students to analyze their own writing with thorough and honest replies; therefore, instructions for the reflection were few. The students were asked to revisit assignment #5 (the final research paper) and explain the choices they made. Nine questions were offered to guide them as they analyzed their writing (see Appendix E). While they were asked to revisit their last essay, they also were encouraged to include any comments regarding writing, writing styles, and/or writing presentations. As mentioned above, the intention was to gather information that may help explain the phenomena occurring in their written compositions under analysis for this study.

Because the students were not required to answer any type or number of questions or required to supply any specific comments, the numbers in the following discussion may appear low and relatively comparable between men and women as illustrated in Table 4.19 below. However, the students' analyses and direct comments are data that are invaluable to this study because the data offer insight into their written work that may have been difficult to explain. For example, one of the distinctions between female and male writing is organizational patterns: women have been known to write inductively, whereas men tend to write deductively. While most students declared which argument style they chose in their final essay (classic, Rogerian, or delayed thesis), the more telling responses included "why" they chose the particular argument.

Table 4.19

Final Reflection
Students' Choice of Argument

Argument	Female N=17		Male N=32	
	#	%	#	%
Classic	9	53	17	53
Rogierian	4	24	5	16
Delayed Thesis	0	0	1	3
Undeclared	4	24	9	28
Chose Classic, but prefer Rogierian	1	6	2	6

The majority of women and men, 53 percent, chose the classic argument style, and 24 percent of the women and 16 percent of the men chose the Rogierian style, respectively. An interesting aspect occurred from the students who chose the classic, even though the numbers are small (one woman, two men): they wrote that they prefer the Rogierian strategy. One female commented, “[Classic] wasn’t my first choice, or my favorite, but it was best for what my goal was.” One of the males preferred the Rogierian because he “feels arguments were better heard and resulted in a more effective paper,” yet he chose the classic style in order to use strong evidence and facts and to “us[e] a very aggressive approach to get my point across.” The other male who chose the classic wrote, “I think the Rogierian strategy is easier and more interesting.” One student who chose the Rogierian strategy reiterated the question that has developed from this analysis:

With a Rogierian argument I can draw the reader in and show them a logical line of reasoning...When trying to convince readers to a certain side of an issue, I would always recommend this argument style. I don’t know why teachers don’t introduce this style of writing often.

The other students who chose the Rogerian argument mainly did so because their audience was hostile to their topic (women, 18 percent; men, 6 percent).

Of the additional students who chose the classic argument, 18 percent of the women and 16 percent of the men wrote that they chose that argument because they were always taught that way. A male student wrote, “I chose to write the standard argument because it is the argument that has been drilled into my head for the last 6 years in my English classes.” A female student replied with the same sentiment: “[I chose] Classical because that’s what I’m most comfortable with and it was drilled into me in high school.” Other reasons why students chose the classic argument were “comfort with the topic” (women, 24 percent; men, 6 percent), “neutral topic” (women, 12 percent; men, 4 percent), and “easier to read” and “for the audience to follow” (women, 6 percent, men, 3 percent). Additionally, 10 percent of men (no women) chose the classic because it is “aggressive”, “indicates the confidence of the reader,” and provides “validity” with the use of facts as evidence.

In addition to argument choice, some students offered comments concerning word choice, tone, and desired effect. Of the students who discussed word choice, 35 percent of women and 19 percent of men described their word choice as “common.” Other word choice descriptions included “informal” (women, 6 percent; men, 6 percent), “simple” (women, 6 percent; no men), “intelligent” (no women; men, 6 percent), and “formal” (women, 6 percent; men, 10 percent). One male, who wrote formally, feared a low grade if he wrote otherwise: “It would’ve been a lot easier if I could’ve written informally, but I didn’t want to get a lower grade that sometimes results from informal papers.” While the above numbers do not create major distinctions between women and men, aggressive word choice marks a definite distinction. Twenty-three percent of the men described their word choice as

“aggressive” and an additional 6 percent chose “mildly aggressive” language. On the contrary, women designated their style as “nonaggressive” and “not to offend”: “[I] didn’t want to be forceful.”

Students did not discuss tone and effect as widely as word choice. Again, of the students who commented, women described their tone as “friendly” (24 percent), “personal” (18 percent), and individual females (6 percent) defined word choice as “polite,” “nonaggressive,” “conversational,” “informal,” and “straightforward.” Men described their tone as “friendly” (16 percent), “personal” (6 percent), and individual males (3 percent) indicated their word choice as “kind,” “nice,” and “attacking.” Unfortunately, students discussed the effect desired even less than the tone. Of the students who commented, four women (24 percent) and four men (13 percent) wrote that they desired an “emotional effect” and “persuasive effect,” and one female (6 percent) and one male (3 percent) described their effect as “suggestive.” The reflections, in addition to the essays, provided empirical data from an uncontrived setting. However, in order to have comparison to past research, in the event that the data would prove inclusive, a questionnaire was created to supplement, not dominate, the authentic data from the students.

Questionnaires

The final data resulted from the questionnaires completed by the students at the close of the semester (see Appendix F). The students provided data that may not have been evident in the writing samples, may have gone undetected in the empirical data, or may have addressed the gaps presented in past research by responding to contrived situations in the questionnaire. After completing general demographic data, the students used a Likert scale to answer questions on the influence of academia and educators on students and their writing

style and process. Given a contrived writing situation, the students completed four questions relating to thesis placement. Lastly, the students answered general inquiry questions on writing and past research findings. All questions on the questionnaire were created to build on each other, and each section consisted of similar questions to increase the response accuracy.

Academic Influence—Likert Scale Results

Students and teachers are aware of the influence that academia and its policies can have on students. Therefore, it is no surprise that teacher influence rates high among the students who completed the questionnaire. See Appendix G, for Tables G.1 and G.2 for complete results. Forty-seven percent of the female participants and 47 percent of the male participants agreed that a student must write the way the teacher wants in order to receive a good grade. Similarly, of the students answering if they feel confident to write in their own style without fear of being downgraded, only 35 percent of the women agreed and only 25 percent of the men agreed. In answering the style question, women and men (35 percent, 34 percent) remained neutral when answering the question. Both genders agreed that teachers encourage certain organizational patterns and that teachers expect the thesis at the beginning of the essay the majority of the time. The items regarding academic writing hinted at the influence of the traditional essay emphasized in the classroom. A high percentage of females (65 percent) and males (59 percent) agreed that academic writing is justified in having conventional patterns. In relation to the items regarding the influence of the same pattern of organization, 59 percent of the women disagreed that academic writing is boring compared to 31 percent of the male participants. Also somewhat interesting is the fact that 72 percent (23 of 32) of the males agreed that academic writing can include emotions, narrative, and/or

personal experience—characteristics associated with feminine writing; only 47 percent (8 of 17) of the female participants agreed.

One last noteworthy occurrence is the results relating to the attitudes regarding women or men as the better writers. Two separate statements appeared on the questionnaire: “Men write better than women.” and “Women write better than men.” In response to “men write better,” over fifty percent of the men responded with a neutral, 9 percent of the men agreed, and 25 percent disagreed strongly. In response to the same question, 6 percent of the women were neutral, 41 percent disagreed, and 47 percent disagreed strongly. In response to “Women write better,” over 50 percent of the men remained neutral, 13 percent agreed, and 25 percent strongly disagreed. In response to the same question, 18 percent of the women remained neutral, 29 percent disagreed, and 53 percent disagreed strongly. The two items essentially were testing the same attitude, yet the results show different percentages.

Given Scenario

The students were given a scenario about two equally effective essays; the only difference was the thesis placement (one essay had the thesis in the opening paragraph, the other had the thesis at the end). The participants were then asked to answer questions pertaining to strength of the essays, teacher preference of thesis placement, and their own opinion regarding where the theses should be placed (see Appendix F). Table 4.20 demonstrates that the majority of students designated thesis statements at the beginning of an essay as stronger essays, the teacher’s preference, and student’s own preference of where the thesis should be placed. Somewhat different from men, female students declared the thesis at the beginning was the stronger essay for the following reasons: “easier to read,” “easier for the writer,” “know where headed,” and “all used in high school.” Male students felt the

Table 4.20

Questionnaire: Students' Choice of Thesis Placement in the Given Scenario

	Begin				End				Other				Delayed			
	F n=17		M n=32		F n=17		M n=32		F n=17		M n=32		F n=17		M n=32	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Stronger Essay	9	53	18	56	4	24	5	16	4	24	9	28	na	na	na	na
Teacher Preference	14	82	25	78	0	0	0	0	3	18	7	22	na	na	na	na
Student Opinion	7	41	16	50	3	18	3	9	3	18	11	34	2	12	2	6

F=Female, M=Male

essay with the beginning thesis was “clear and structured,” “able to develop ideas,” “keep reader by telling right away,” and “no confusion.” (See Appendix H for examples of illustrated responses.)

Evidence

In the next section of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to circle the type of evidence, reasons, and/or backing they use in their essays. Table 4.21 illustrates the totals for women's and men's evidence usage and Appendix H, Tables H.3 and H.4, offer female and male illustrative responses. The two types of evidence circled by most participants were facts and personal experience; facts was the highest among men, and personal experience was highest among women. This occurrence was not peculiar since past researchers deem facts as objective, concrete, straightforward (masculine characteristics) and personal experience as audience centered, engaging, and personal (feminine characteristics). However, personal experience also registered high with the male participants.

Table 4.21

Questionnaire: Students' Choice of Evidence to Use in Writing

	Female n=17		Male n=32	
	#	%	#	%
Facts	14	82	30	94
Narrative	8	48	8	25
Personal Experience	16	94	26	81
Statistics	11	65	15	47
Other	1	6	1	3

General Inquiry

To complete the questionnaire, the participants were asked to answer general inquiry questions related to writing (Table 4.22). To combat any possible researcher effect or classroom influence on the validity of the study, everyone was asked if they were familiar with the Rogerian argument. One male had been introduced to the Rogerian strategy in a high school composition class; no females had been introduced to the Rogerian argument prior to this class participating in the study. Secondly, the participants were asked if they were taught any alternative writing styles prior to English 105. One additional male had been introduced to the delayed thesis strategy, and one female had experience with alternative writing styles in her high school in Germany.

The three remaining questions centered on the participants' opinions and served to reinforce the questions and answers presented in the other formats. Past research points out that men like to write more than women; hence the posed question, "do you like to write?" The numbers for females and males were almost equal. While 50 percent of the men wrote they like to write, the percentage of women for this study was a bit higher, 58 percent. When

Table 4.22

Questionnaire: General Inquiry on Writing

	Yes				No				Unsure			
	F n=17		M n=32		F n=17		M n=32		F n=17		M n=32	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1. Had you ever heard of the Rogerian strategy prior to English 105?	0	0	1	3	17	100	31	97	0	0	0	0
2. Have you ever been taught alternative writing styles in addition to the "classic" style prior to English 105?	1	6	1	3	14	82	31	97	2	12	0	0
3. Do you like to write?	10	59	16	94	4	24	9	28	3	18	7	32
4. Do you believe women and men write differently?	13	59	22	69	4	24	7	22	0	0	3	9
5. Do you believe there is more than one right way to write a paper?	17	100	30	94	0	0	2	6	0	0	0	0

F=Female, M=Male

asked if women and men write differently, 76 percent of the women answered yes, and 69 percent of the men answered yes. Referring to academic influence, the last question correlated with offering alternative styles. One hundred percent of the women agreed that there is more than one way to write a paper. Ninety-four percent of the men also agreed that there are alternative ways to produce a well-written paper.

After sixteen weeks of classes, 290 essays, 49 reflections, and 49 questionnaires, the wealth of information, analysis, and examples have culminated into answers for the research questions presented at the beginning of the study. I will discuss in Chapter Five the findings described here, comparing them to the findings of past researchers and the researchers' definition of feminine rhetoric.

FIVE

DISCUSSION

“This paper will show how the present method of teaching students in today’s institutions of learning do nothing more than remove creativity, demote personal intuition, and abolish individuality.”

Male, ISU English 105

The fact that women are writing is not surprising; women have been writing for centuries. The idea that women may write differently and exhibit a unique rhetoric, on the other hand, is an important language facet to consider. The data from this study suggest that students avoid alternative rhetoric in order to satisfy the teacher’s expectations and earn a good grade. As a teacher, I find the above quotation, written by a participant of this study, troubling especially when relevant research suggests that the standard rhetoric continues to resemble a masculine style: “logical, competitive, and authoritative” (David 157). Who is listening to the voice in the above quotation?

To fill the gaps that exist in research and to respond to scholars who believe that there is no major rhetorical theory by women, I framed my research objectives to investigate the existence of feminine rhetoric in the college composition classroom:

1. Are there noticeable differences between women’s and men’s written essays in terms of content, organization, evidence, and stylistic choices in English 105? If so, what are they?
2. If writing differences are evident, are women consistently demonstrating what researchers label as feminine rhetoric?

3. If writing differences are prevalent in student essays, should teachers recognize feminine rhetoric in English composition classroom?

In the following, I will discuss the noticeable differences between female and male writing pertaining to content, organization, evidence, and style. Additionally, I will address if women in the composition class consistently contribute to the presumption that “many” women display characteristics of feminine rhetoric (Lunsford 6). Although the composition classes of this study cannot provide generalizations outside of ISU first-year composition classes, the data may be true for other ISU English composition classes.

Are There Differences in Female and Male Rhetoric?

My first research question focused on the investigation of noticeable differences between women’s and men’s written essays. I hypothesized that students would demonstrate gender differences in their writing in accord with past research: women’s content would focus on issues characteristic of women’s values and interests; organization would be inductive; and writing style would include personal experience, narrative, and high numbers of intensifiers and emphasis. Overall, female and male writing was not dramatically different. Content choice was typically the distinction; women chose topics traditionally associated with female values and men chose masculine topics. In terms of organization, most women followed a deductive pattern, although some expressed their disdain for it. Interestingly, the data presented suggest that more men than women chose alternative organizational patterns.

Content

Past researchers, as mentioned in Chapter Two, have written that women focus on topics that relate to women’s interests, including but not limited to family, children, health,

and other topics traditionally associated with feminine nature. Knowing this, I expected the essays written by women to resemble the research findings. While female and male choices did not offer definitive results, some of the numbers relating to topic deserve some discussion. Not surprisingly, women and men did not stray from their respective traditional topics.

Topic Selection. The topics chosen by each gender did not stray from the traditional feminine or masculine. Women focused on marriage and family—issues relating to the feminine stereotype. Men did not choose topics about marriage or family. In contrast, men wrote about alcohol/tobacco, automobiles, and sports whereas women did not. These three topic choices remained consistent through all three essays (content was irrelevant in the first essay) as did the numbers. Perhaps the data follow the traditional pattern, although somewhat stereotypical, resulting from societal norms. Alcohol and tobacco have been more widely used by and are more socially acceptable for men. If a woman were to drink the same amount as a man, she would be an anomaly and perhaps classified as a drunk or lush, whereas men can drink excessively and are viewed as guys who like to have a good time. Likewise, although times are changing, the automobile arena and sports are still considered male domains. An additional noteworthy discovery was that some men wrote on the same topics as women (with the exception of traditional feminine issues), but women did not write on traditional male issues (alcohol, automobiles, sports).

Another significant difference between female and male topic choice was law-related subjects. In assignments four and five, more men wrote on topics concerning laws. The results here suggest that men are more likely to discuss matters of a larger, business nature: U.S. legislation, U.S. immigration, English only, speed limits, and computer monopoly laws.

Also contributing to this analysis was the fact that men emphasized money, jobs, and equality (for all *men* [emphasis mine]). Raised to be strong, dominant, and decision-makers, men wrote about public topics that did not require any emotional connections. Women, on the other hand, discussed matters related to the personal aspects of one's life: helping childless couples, preventing violence, protecting children, sustaining relationships, and combating world hunger. Raised to be caretakers, kind, and nurturing (feminine characteristics), women discussed topics that could lead to a more feeling-/emotionally oriented presentation—family issues, caring, and morality. These two phenomena confirm what David found in her study concerning women writing on women's issues that relate to “romantic love; nurturing and stewardship; connectedness; and psychological growth and development” (169).

Medium Selection. In addition to topic selection, the medium chosen in Assignment #2 contributed to content analysis. Women and men equally chose magazines as their medium of analysis. Typically, women chose “female” magazines, and men chose “male” magazines. The magazine choices are consistent with research and confirm my original hypothesis that women would focus on traditional feminine content. The analysis by the students, in itself, is a gendered analysis and follows the magazine market's audience segmentation. Students automatically associated *Sports Illustrated* with men or *Cosmo* with women. Only men used *Newsweek* and *Time* for their analyses, although these magazines should be considered neutral and general-audience publications. Perhaps this gender discrepancy exists because, as a student pointed out, some of society and those who are in power still believe that *Newsweek* and *Time* are for “businessmen” (male), not business people. In addition, the consistency by women and men choosing their respective feminine or masculine topics and mediums may be due to choosing to write about what they knew. I

encouraged students to write about what interests them because the writer is more engaged and hence produces better writing results; in other words, the writer may put more effort and time into a project that she/he wants to explore. With the exception of self-interest, who is accountable for women being interested only in feminine topics? Women should not be the only gender to write about family and children even though men take less responsibility for children and family-related matters than women. Researchers who discuss feminine rhetoric claim that feminine rhetoric needs to be recognized because women are more inclined to use the feminine characteristics. Perhaps females and males choosing traditional feminine or masculine topics and mediums has less to do with their *essentialist* choice and more to do with familiarity. Society, culture, and outside influences play a major role in the decisions females and males make, to such a high degree that no matter the amount of data collected, *essential* choices may be difficult to detect.

Organization

Receiving authentic data was an essential component to the success of this study. While researchers have completed studies examining feminine and masculine rhetoric, the participants in this study provided written essays commonly written in the composition classroom. The classroom, comprised of mostly first-year college students, was an opportunity to investigate the notion that women write inductively, as past research indicates, as opposed to using the traditional deductive organizational structure. From the research presented, I hypothesized that women's and men's writing would differ: women would demonstrate alternative rhetorical styles more than men, and men would follow the traditional deductive structure.

Thesis Placement. Every participant has taken at least three years of high school English courses and either taken or tested out of ISU English 104 (the first component of ISU's First-Year Composition) (see Appendix B). Therefore, the participants would have received some instruction on organizational structure. However, as mentioned in Chapter Four, my personal teaching philosophy is not to give explicit organizational requirements; this philosophy also helped to keep variables in this study to a minimum. While women and men did differ in organizational structure, the data disproved my hypothesis: overall, most women followed a deductive pattern, and more men than hypothesized chose and demonstrated delayed thesis placement.

Assignment #2 (analysis and evaluation of two related articles) did not provide major distinctions between women and men that differed from past research. Women more than men placed their theses at the end of their essays, but an equal number of women placed the thesis statement at the beginning. In contrast to women, the majority of men placed the thesis statement at the beginning, following the traditional pattern.

In contrast to Assignment #2, the majority of students followed the traditional format and placed the thesis in the opening paragraph in Assignment #3. In fact, some students followed the pattern of the traditional five-paragraph essay. When students have to create their own analysis and the prose describing that analysis, they tend to use techniques that they know. In comparison to the first essay, where the material the students used to make their argument was already written in the form of published articles, the students had to choose their own information and provide the details to describe their position in Assignment #3. Again, students making their own writing decisions raises an interesting question: do the students' styles reflect what is preferred by them or is their writing a reflection of what has

always been taught? Unfortunately, a definitive answer to this question is not possible given only the data here. However, it is important to note that one of the male participants, who wrote in the traditional style, analyzed an article and eventually offered a high evaluation of the article because he “liked the use of suspense. He [the author of the published article] did not state the point of why he was writing until about half way through the reading.”

Ironically, this male student indicated his liking of the delayed thesis, yet he wrote using traditional organization. If students were given more opportunities to use alternative rhetorics, perhaps they could enjoy their writing as well as learn from it.

As expected, dominant thesis placement occurred equally in the opening paragraphs of both women and men, with the exception of the Rogerian argument assignment. The traditional format choice should not be surprising even though the majority of women displaying a traditional format selection does contradict past research. Most English textbooks and handbooks suggest that the thesis be placed at the beginning. Andrea Lunsford and Robert Connors state in *The New St. Martin's Handbook*: “Most kinds of college writing contain a thesis statement, often near the beginning...” (37). Diane Hacker in *A Writer's Reference* reiterates the stance and takes it a step further: “The thesis frequently appears at the end of the introduction, [but] it can easily appear at the beginning [of the introduction]. Much work-related writing, in which a straightforward approach is most effective, commonly begins with the thesis” (11). University professors will agree that theses at the beginning and forecast of organization is the “sort of thing that academics like.”¹³ Students ultimately rely on good grades to help them stay in college and receive a

¹³ Associate Professor, English Department, Iowa State University. Quotation was written on a paper composed by a graduate student.

job after college; how can we expect them to go against the traditional academic system and professors and write any differently?

Lack of Thesis. The larger implication of this study resides with the data that present no distinguishable thesis and/or attempt. This lack of thesis may be the result of two factors: 1) the writers are novices, which includes the writer's lack of experience/knowledge concerning the difference between a forecast statement and a thesis statement; and 2) the notion that students' concerns for grades influences their writing; they do exactly what the instructor and/or book requests rather than just write what they prefer.

The implication that students lack writing experience, or lack college writing experience, raises an important question regarding this study. Does the intermingling of forecast and thesis statements truly indicate a deficiency (lack of experience) or could this novice writing be an indication of a style that is authentic to the individual? Students who used forecast statements in the opening paragraph may simply not know how to write a proper thesis statement; however, the forecast could also indicate an inductive organization as she/he gives all the information and finishes with her/his position. The forecast then becomes a method to draw in the reading audience without the risk of offending readers with the author's stated position—a feminine characteristic. Therefore, this lack of thesis may suggest that inductive writing is evident in women's and men's written essays of the college composition classroom and deserves attention. When analyzing and evaluating an essay structured in opposition to the traditional format, one might ask which essay is stronger and clearer. While this question is indeed important, my intention in this study was not to evaluate the essays but rather analyze for any indication of feminine rhetoric.

Hypothesis Disproved in the Rogerian. Because past research has indicated that women tend to illustrate the use of feminine styles, including inductive organization, I expected female participants to consistently follow the Rogerian format. While the majority of the time the thesis statement is traditionally placed in the opening paragraph, the Rogerian argument specifically requires the thesis to be placed late in the text. While most women did follow the Rogerian, the ones who did not follow the format are worth noting, including three women (opposed to only one man) who had thesis statements in the opening paragraph. Women straying from the Rogerian strategy in terms of thesis placement may suggest two things. One, women have been educated to use the dominant pattern; or two, the delayed and/or end thesis is not a preferred form of writing for females. If the latter is true, this contradicts what researchers have been saying about the feminine style and may indicate that even if a feminine rhetoric does exist, women are not necessarily using this type of language and writing style. On the other hand, the evidence here raises an important question: Are women abandoning an authentic voice to engage in male rhetoric?

I had originally hypothesized that men would be inclined to stray from the Rogerian format and remain true to the masculine organizational patterns. The results of this study suggest the opposite occurred. Not only did men demonstrate a cooperative style following the Rogerian format, they offered compromises between their original position and the opposing side of their argument. The patterns demonstrated by male writers seem to suggest one of three things: men follow directions better; they are just as comfortable with the Rogerian argument as they would be with the traditional rhetoric that has always been taught; or there is no natural form of writing, feminine or masculine. Additionally, the fact that men offered delayed theses and compromises demonstrates that men can see other points of view,

opposing the research that insinuates men are authoritarian. The evidence that men as well as women are comfortable using a rhetoric based on feminine characteristics reaffirms the necessity to acknowledge this rhetoric as a viable alternative.

Choice of Organization. In the final assignment, 29 percent of women and men placed their thesis statements at the end of their essay and deliberately chose to write inductively; additionally, men used delayed thesis statements. Not only do these factors suggest that alternative rhetoric is evident in the college classroom, they show that men are using nontraditional arguments as well as women. The students' main reason for choosing the Rogerian format was audience awareness—whom the students were addressing in their essays. The writers chose the Rogerian strategy because they did not want to offend or influence the audience too strongly with their own opinion. Two students, for example, wrote in their final reflections: “This [Rogerian format] enabled me to present the facts of the matter without allowing too many of my personal feelings show in the beginning of the paper. I wanted to make sure that before any points of disagreement were introduced the readers had a clear view of the facts” (Female); and “I chose to use the Rogerian style...I made sure that I ‘sugar-coated’ some of the facts to make them less offensive to my audience. I found a happy medium between too passive and too aggressive” (Male). Not wanting to risk offending or come on too strong, the reasons given by the female and male are feminine characteristics that demonstrate the focus on the audience rather than the writer (Campbell, *Man* 14). In contrast to the traditional format, the audience is the focus rather than the writer. In this respect, passivity as a feminine characteristic is not detrimental; on the contrary, it creates bridges between author and audience, and chances for acceptance of the author and argument are increased. When women were once seen as weak for displaying

passivity, ~~they now can be viewed as cooperative~~. As the data suggest, men are also slowly departing from the traditional straightforward organization. While the number of writers who chose alternative rhetoric is not astounding, the data show a slight indication that women and men do not significantly differentiate in choices of organization and the use of feminine rhetorical styles. The display of feminine characteristics by both genders confirms research that states there is a feminine rhetoric and adds an additional perspective—men are also illustrating the use of characteristics past researchers have labeled as feminine.

Audience awareness is not a new reason for changing one's organizational format, nor is it the sole reason for the necessary recognition and acceptance of feminine rhetoric styles. While the data show some choice of alternative rhetoric, it is also important to point out the students who had clearer theses at the end of the essay, thus perhaps suggesting a preferred style irrelevant to choice. While only two women demonstrated this phenomenon in this last essay, each essay analyzed in this study had some evidence of clearer, more recognizable thesis statements at the end of the essays with evidence that leading to the final conclusion. Traditionally, a writing teacher or editor would tell the author to move the paragraphs to the beginning of the paper and then expand in the body. However, as more people are writing clear, understandable essays but withholding their position until the end, traditions can be altered. Businesses, corporations, and other establishments requiring writing are striving for teamwork and cooperative environments. Writers who reflect this same cooperation and compassion in their writing may have an advantage.

Evidence

Every argument, written or spoken, should have supportive evidence to enhance the author's claims and strengthen her/his position. Therefore, the evidence used by each writer

was analyzed to investigate if women and men use different types of evidence to support their claims. Following past research, I hypothesized that women would use more narratives, examples, and personal experience to enhance their positions. Because the students participating in this study have minimal writing experience, I also expected men to use personal experience but fewer narratives or examples. Students demonstrated minimal usage of a variety of evidence types for the majority of the essays. With the exception of the final essay, low numbers of evidence types may have occurred for two reasons: 1) evidence, particularly formal, was not required; and 2) the assignments were not considered “formal research” in the same sense as a research paper. Overall, confirming research and supporting my hypothesis, women used personal experience but that did not distinguish them from men because men also used personal experience. Metaphors, narratives, and analogies were scarcely evident in women’s writing in contrast to research focusing on feminine rhetoric.

Personal Experience and Examples. Overwhelmingly, the evidence used by women and men was personal experience. The use of personal experience both confirms what researchers write about feminine rhetoric and my hypothesis. However, the use by men is worth noting. While research indicates that personal experience is a characteristic of feminine style, it is not surprising that women and men equally chose personal experience. For one reason, the writers were not required to have formal research; therefore, they used what they had in their repertoire. Their use of personal experience is more a result of their limited educational background than their gender. As novice writers, they have to revert to their own experiences to make any judgements. Similar to personal experience, examples as evidence were used by both women and men. The difference, however, is that more men than women used examples in their writing.

Metaphors, Narrative, and Analogies. Researchers who advocate for a separate and distinct feminine rhetoric and insist there are differences between women's and men's writing point out that the evidence women use is metaphors, narratives, and analogies. These types of evidence encourage audience participation without the presence of a dominant writer, which is a characteristic of traditional rhetoric (Campbell, Dow and Tonn). However, few women (and even fewer men) used narrative and analogies in the final essays of this study. Although the low numbers cannot provide conclusive data, the lack of usage may be the result of lack of alternative styles taught in previous educational settings and other classrooms. Students are inundated with the traditional, unemotional, and "get-to-the-point" style, and they are not being introduced to the use of narrative as viable support evidence. Perhaps the constant emphasis on the classic organization—introduction, body, conclusion—has stymied the use of metaphors, narrative, and analogies because they do not demonstrate clear-cut relationships to the topic. The audience has to think and invert their own thoughts; the fast-paced world of technology leaves little room and little time for stories. Women's omission of this type of evidence contradicts what researchers have written about female writers and disproves my hypothesis that my data would confirm past research findings. It is important to note that metaphors, narrative, and analogies have been traditionally nonacademic in the sciences and social sciences and people who used them may have been at a disadvantage. Therefore, if women were to succeed in academia, it was necessary for them to adopt the masculine forms of rhetoric.

Males of this study, on the other hand, demonstrated the feminine characteristics in their writing that were absent from the female writers' essays. Examples, metaphors, and narrative were used by more men than women. The reasons for the usage by men could be

numerous, but one can speculate as to why more men than women use these particular characteristics: the men who exhibit the feminine characteristics have been exposed to them in past classes; they may have had a teacher, particularly a female teacher, who is aware of alternative rhetorics, who allowed them the freedom to find their own voice; they may have taken a creative writing class; or they may have a dominant female in their lives who has influenced them. With the increased usage of feminine rhetorical styles, by both women and men, academia and other writing communities need to acknowledge the different types of supportive evidence. Urary addresses this notion: “Only when we tell our stories, talk out our maladies, does the possibility of freedom exist. Silence leads us nowhere” (132).

Statistics. More men than women used statistics as evidence in the essays analyzed. The fact that more men than women used statistics is not an anomaly. Statistical evidence is difficult to refute and use of statistical evidence frees the author from any emotional attachment to the data—characteristically fitting for both men and the dominant traditional rhetoric.

World Wide Web (WWW). The use of the World Wide Web (WWW) by men deserves notice and suggests avenues for future research. The use by men is not peculiar because men are traditionally considered to be more technology oriented. This study alone, two English 105 sections, includes twenty-two men majoring in some type of engineering or information systems compared to one woman majoring in information systems (see Appendix B for list of students’ major areas of study). The question was posed earlier about what men’s frequent use of technology could indicate for women and women’s future in this technological age. Could this piece of data suggest that women lag behind men again? It is possible that the lack of WWW use by females is an isolated event or a result of lack of

resources and cannot indicate women's ineptitude with technology. The low usage of the Internet as evidence may be an area for further investigation.

Writing Style

The final component used for the investigation of differences between female and male essays was the writing style demonstrated by each participant. Guided by the first research question asking if women's and men's writing differs, I analyzed the essays for stylistic categories including, but not limited to, emotional prose, use of questions, intensifiers, expletives, possibilities, uncertainty, and emphasis. Because each of the four essays had different objectives and content, writing characteristics varied among the essays. Nevertheless, I anticipated differences in women's and men's rhetoric including women demonstrating more use of intensifiers and possibilities and displaying more emotion and uncertainty. Overall, the writing characteristics of all four essays remained surprisingly consistent in the choices women and men made. However, only a few of these characteristics were used repeatedly by women and men in each essay. Except for two or three characteristics with high use by women and men, most characteristics had fewer than 30 percent usage in the papers analyzed.

Straightforward Prose versus Emotional Prose. The first essay analyzed contained elements consistent with past research; for example, male writers were more likely to use straightforward prose. For years, academia and rhetoricians have preferred straightforward, forceful, concise, "get to the point" prose that did not have emotional elements, empty adjectives and adverbs, or excess details. In this study, straightforward prose was also defined by clear and succinct sentences, topic sentences, transitions, and conclusions.

In contrast to the men, women used emotional prose and positive tone. Prose used by women was characterized by words denoting nonaggression, emotional feelings, personal connections, and positiveness. When analyzing and evaluating the articles for the assignment, one female writer, the only writer out of forty-six papers, evaluated the positive aspects of the articles rather than criticizing the writers for their seemingly misguided claims. The writer demonstrated a nonhostile style indicative of the traditional caring woman yet she established a strong analytical position. David finds the same caring tone in her analysis of women executives' metaphorical use (169).

Authoritarian versus Conciliatory. Similar to the differences between men and women using straightforward and emotional prose, I also found that the data suggest differences in the use of authoritarian language and conciliatory language confirming what Campbell and David have written. Male writers used aggressive language that advocated necessary action from the readers. Men used more graphic language than did women when topic choice was the same (i.e., Kosovo, abortion, euthanasia). When asked to describe their language, men described their language as "aggressive," whereas women explicitly wrote "nonaggressive."

In contrast to men, women used language denoting conciliation and harmony between the reader and writer, confirming past research. Phrases, such as "I understand" or "I realize their situation" depicted a personal tone and were commonly used by women. The female writers appeared to have used the conciliatory techniques to involve the audience. They were able to describe their topic without heavily influencing their readers.

Use of Questions. Data from this study suggest that women are continuing to use feminine characteristics as researchers point out; however, what researchers may have seen

as weak or indecisive can be seen as a positive characteristic because the characteristics can create a bridge from the writer to the audience. For example, more women writers in assignment #2 exhibited the use of questions than men. At one time, questions (sometimes know as hedges) were viewed as a sign of weakness or lack of confidence. However, questions are a way to avoid threatening or offending the audience (Key 69). The sense of cooperation between the writer and the reader is a way to increase communication with each other. With communication lines open, what was once seen as compromises can now be viewed as cooperation. Furthermore, the writer does not lose clarity while presenting her/his argument when using compromising techniques or understanding tone./

In contrast to assignment #2, the final essay suggests that men are using questions equally to women. Also important to note is that while women did demonstrate use of questions in place of statements confirming past research, men did the same. This phenomenon is important for women and men. Questions can be seen as nonaggressive, which for women confirms past research; but for men, the use of questions contradicts past research and disproves my hypothesis that men will consistently use an aggressive style and follow traditional masculine styles.

Intensifiers. The use of intensifiers garnered high numbers among female writers—more than men in every assignment except for the Rogerian strategy. The majority of intensifiers included words that add or increase the emotional attachment of the author and reader to the topic. However, writing handbooks do not see intensifiers as necessary additions. In fact, intensifiers such as "absolutely," "awesome," "really," and "very," are labeled as "meaningless modifiers" (Lunsford and Connors 252). When the standard writing handbooks, such as *The New St. Martin's Handbook* used in the participants' classroom,

designate certain types of speech "meaningless," the chance of their use is slim.

Furthermore, if students (women) do use intensifiers, they risk being viewed as inferior.

Essentially, the vicious circle will continue unless recognition of feminine characteristics becomes reality and changes are made in the handbooks and textbooks that students read, use, and follow.

In contrast to the other three essays, men not only used intensifiers, but more men than women used intensifiers in the Rogerian assignment, a genre where we would expect feminine characteristics to be prevalent. The fact that men adopted intensifiers in their writing while at the same time retained masculine characteristics hints at men's "independence" (David 165) to choose female characteristics where they preferred. When women practiced male rhetorical strategies, they did so out of the necessity of having their ideas recognized, and they risked being viewed as aggressive. Conversely, this study suggests that men are freer to demonstrate the use of both characteristics because of the social privilege that men have. The fact that men adopted intensifiers in to their writing while at the same time remained objective hints at men's "independence" (David 165).

Expletives. In the second essay analyzed, a moderate percentage of females demonstrated the use of expletives. This has traditionally been a way to present material objectively (third person); women using the characteristic, as data suggest, would be demonstrating a masculine characteristic. However, *The New St. Martins Handbook* describes expletives as weak verb construction or an "effective way of introducing an idea with extra emphasis" (278). With this definition, the use of expletives could be considered a feminine characteristic because women are known to add extra emphasis. But, Andrea Lunsford and Robert Connors, editors of *The New St. Martin's Handbook*, add an additional

explanation: "Often however, writers do not use expletive openings to add emphasis.

Instead, they merely overuse them, creating sentences that needlessly bury action in nouns, verbals, or dependent clauses" (278). In other words, the handbook is emphasizing a style based on the traditional male rhetoric: virile and straightforward. The interesting facet of this explanation is that women who use expletives face Lakoff's "razor's edge": women exhibit objectivity, but writers who have the power to edit handbooks, and hence influence countless writers, decide that expletives are just another way to add unnecessary emphasis. To combat the adversaries, women have to be advocates for themselves.

In comparison to women, men also registered high numbers of usage of expletives. The data suggest that men are continuing to use expletives to demonstrate an objective stance. Men using expletives could also suggest that men are demonstrating feminine characteristics as defined by past researchers. Instead of viewing expletives as negative, according to traditional standards, scholars may need to revisit the component if more writers are demonstrating the characteristic.

Expletives were not the only feminine characteristic that men displayed in their writing; they also exhibited use of intensifiers, possibilities, emotional prose, and examples. In David's study of female executive rhetorical styles, she points out that "support by example and inclus[ion] of own experience are rhetorical factors identified as female" (166). The fact that men display similar writing characteristics as females in these particular essays offers the possibility that women and men do not write differently as past research has declared.

Possibilities, Uncertainty, and Examples. Women continued to exhibit the characteristics identified as feminine as higher numbers of women used possibilities.

However, only a few women exhibited the remaining rhetorical styles identified as feminine (uncertainty and examples). Because the essays increased in importance (points toward grade, topic importance, and necessary skills), data suggest that women exhibited the characteristics traditionally associated with academia.

While these findings remain consistent with past research, the use of intensifiers and possibilities does not necessarily strengthen the recognition of a feminine rhetoric. Women are demonstrating these characteristics but demonstration may not be enough to attract rhetoricians because the writing styles labeled feminine characteristics discussed above could be considered weak by writing analysts. However, by what and whose standards is this type of prose correct? Obviously, patriarchal theories and traditions have influenced what is correct and who has the power to make the decisions (Ulary). What is considered correct has become standard writing conventions, therefore leading many students to see alternative styles as inferior.

Length of Essay

The final analytical tools used for this study to investigate if differences exist between women's and men's writing were the analysis of length of essays and the person in which the author wrote. The analysis of length proved to be inconclusive because it was difficult to judge accurately the length of papers. The average length of papers between the genders was calculated and tabulated; however, considering students' choices of different fonts and paragraph construction, the number of pages could not accurately measure the lengths of papers in order to suggest any conclusions. Nevertheless, length was an issue with the students. The students were never required to write a minimum or maximum number of pages for any of the assignments, but someone always asked how long the paper had to be.

The reply given to the students was "write as much as you think necessary to accomplish your task." The fact that women and men averaged nearly identical page lengths may support their being first-year college students rather than implying any gender differentiation.

Use of Person

There is a saying that promotes teamwork and cooperation: "There is no 'I' in 'TEAM.'" For many years, there was no "I" in academic writing either. While the students predominantly wrote in third person, there were students who used first person and the combination of first and third. In general, these data may reflect the inexperience of writers. On the other hand, the data may implicate the continuing trend of using first person in formal writing and the beginning erosion of the dominant masculine traditions in writing. Susan David Bernstein discusses first-person theorizing in contemporary scholarship:

I am interested in the intrusive "I" as a rhetorical event; this textual monument carries the capacity to accentuate and overturn conventions of authority, particularly the pretense of objectivity as an ideological cover for masculine privilege....Because subjectivity is the cornerstone of feminist inquiry, it is no wonder that first-person theorizing, with its insistence on the "I," has garnered so many practitioners. (175)

Bernstein's "practitioners" may be the published women writers discussing feminist critical theory, but female students participating in the study are also using first person in their writing. In spite of Bernstein's relation of first person to the feminine, results of the study show that the male writers wrote in the first person in equal numbers to the females. Again, data suggest there is little difference between female and male writers. Although men are

writing in first person, researchers have to keep in mind that this is a step out of the tradition and a step toward acknowledging feminine rhetoric.

Are Researchers Wrong?

Past researchers have identified certain writing characteristics exhibited by women and labeled them "feminine." The data of this study indicate that differences exist between female and male writing, but the inconsistency of feminine characteristics used by the participants suggests that the feminine writing characteristics are not necessarily inherent. However, the lack of differences does not disprove what researchers have written but rather says that the women of this study did not demonstrate the use of feminine rhetoric. Nevertheless, I believe after research and close reading of the data that the participants are socially constructed and taught to write in traditional styles. Furthermore, writing styles characterized as feminine continue to be considered as nonrhetorical in the traditional circles and therefore are not readily used and accepted in academia. This fact becomes even more interesting as the data from this study suggest that men and women are using some of the same writing styles—feminine and masculine. With the awareness, even if minimal, that feminine rhetoric exists in both female and male essays, researchers have to continue to research and write about feminine rhetorical devices in order for alternative rhetorics to be recognized. Acknowledging that either gender can readily use alternative styles will refute the traditional claims that only one form of rhetoric is acceptable in academia.

Are Women Consistently Demonstrating Feminine Rhetoric?

When investigating the differences between women's and men's writing styles, I found that while women did demonstrate feminine characteristics, the majority of women did not illustrate feminine characteristics conforming to Lunsford's "many women." Women

wrote on feminine topics and used personal experience, intensifiers, and questions, confirming research. Contradicting research, women did not demonstrate inductive organization, nor did they use narratives, metaphors, or analogies as evidence. In the analysis of men's writing, I also discovered new insights that had not been directly addressed in past research. Men did exhibit writing typical of male values (straightforward prose, expletives, aggressive language); unexpectedly evident, though, is the number of males also demonstrating the use of feminine writing styles. On the other hand, men not only demonstrated traditional male writing characteristics, but they also exhibited feminine characteristics, contradicting what past researchers have written. For example, men displayed alternative rhetorical patterns and used narrative, metaphors, and analogy in higher numbers compared to women.

The data suggest that men exhibited multiple writing styles, which is characteristically a feminine trait. Schowalter views this dual language usage as women's "bilingual nature" (see Chapter Two), and Kristeva suggests a type of "reconciliation" (see Chapter Two). The writing community, including the decision-makers, cannot continue to ignore the contribution of feminine rhetoric. In order for feminine rhetoric to have its rightful place in rhetorical history, it may have to begin with more males demonstrating the feminine characteristics. While this may seem like feminine rhetorical strategies are forging into rhetorical history through the back door, one must view this inclusion as a start. Feminine rhetoric may enter through the back door, but once it receives acknowledgment, acceptance and rhetorical theories will be the next step.

✓ **Should Teachers Recognize Feminine Rhetoric?**

The challenge is not only to determine if a unique rhetoric exists in a society (including the academic arena) that has been dominated by male traditions and ruled by theories based on masculine values; it is also a challenge to acknowledge and accept feminine rhetoric as a viable rhetorical style. As my analysis of the students' written work continued, whether or not a true feminine rhetoric can become recognized came into question, especially since schools and teachers heavily influence female and male writers. Students are influenced by grades—after all, a passing grade can be the equivalent of remaining in college, or a B can help retain a grade point average necessary for a scholarship, or an A can land that big job or graduate school acceptance. Whatever the case may be, we all must admit that grades, and therefore the people who have the power to distribute grades, have a major influence on academic actions. With this in mind, instructors and the grades they give influence an “individual style,” especially because most writers have only been taught a method resembling a masculine style based on theories established by men and influenced by Western culture. Of interest for this study were the students' beliefs about how academia influences their writing and also the students' attitudes relating to writing.

Questionnaire and Reflections

The results from the questionnaires indicate that students rate teacher influence high; students agree that students must write the way a teacher wants them to write to receive a good grade (see Appendices 7-9 for questionnaire results and responses). A relatively low number of students agree that they can try their own styles and be confident the instructor will not lower their grade or make them change their style. Hence, even if a woman did have essential characteristics that follow traditional feminine traits and are preferred by women,

researchers would have difficulty detecting the style because she would choose to write what she thinks is expected from her instructor.

The results from the questionnaire also provide clues to why feminine rhetorical style was not overwhelmingly evident in the female essays. Only 47 percent of the women, compared to 72 percent of the men, agreed that academic writing could include emotions, narrative, and/or personal experience. In addition, 41 percent of the women agreed that academic writing was boring because it follows the same pattern all the time. Therefore, this seeming contradiction suggests that women viewed these two statements/questions differently because of the phrase “academic writing.” Academic writing still implies language characterized by male values, and consequently because education has “traditionally been framed in male terms” (David 154), women are writing what they have been taught, which may or may not be different from the feminine writing characteristics that females may prefer or are more inclined to use. Although women's adherence to academic patterns supports the postmodern feminist position that asserts women are able to write in different styles to fit the appropriate situation, the fact that women follow what they have always been taught (the traditional patterns) is an issue to consider.

When students were asked, via the questionnaire, if they had ever heard of the Rogerian Strategy prior to English 105, all of the women and all but one man circled “no.” When asked if they have been taught any alternative writing styles prior to English 105, the majority of females and males circled “no.” It must be emphasized that these data are the results from only two sections of English out of a multitude of English classes offered across the United States in most college settings. However, the data suggest there is a serious problem for researchers who want to investigate alternative rhetorics when students are not

even aware that other styles exist. “I think my English teachers have influenced my style of writing. We mainly wrote in classical arguments and they would rarely let us turn from their guidelines” (Female Reflection). Perhaps the lack of opportunity to write using alternative styles contribute to the students’ choices of style and arguments.

The pedagogical implication ranges from simple inclusion of alternative styles in the classroom to complicated acknowledgment that feminine rhetoric deserves recognition as its own rhetorical theory. Beginning with the students taking part in this study, this study shows that some students are writing merely for a grade: “Mostly, I was interested in getting a good grade and tried to figure out how to lose as few points as possible” (Female Reflection); and “When the instructor and the student disagree about the way essays should be written, grades may be lowered” (Male Reflection). Instructors, professors, and textbook writers have to realize the power they hold in the classroom and hence how they control what characteristics the students use in their every day writing. In fact, the way students view gender behaviors and styles protrudes beyond the written word:

I am still stuck on putting my thesis at the beginning of the essay, as the last sentence of the first paragraph. I think of it as boring and unadventurous, but I cannot make myself put it anywhere else. Not one of my writing instructors has ever given me the option of placing my thesis at any other area, so I never tried it or even considered it. I hope to try that [thesis sentence is the very last sentence of paper] some day, but I haven’t been able to pull it out of that first paragraph and not feel like I’ll be getting in trouble for it. (Female Reflection, English 105)

What kind of “trouble” is the woman referring to in the above passage? Does trouble mean a lower grade? Does it mean trouble from her instructor? Whatever the connotation is, why do women, this young woman in particular, feel they will get in “trouble” for placing a thesis at the end of the paper? “Women are not in the wrong when they decline to accept the rules laid down for them, since the men make the rules without consulting them” (qtd. in de Beauvoir xlvii).¹⁴ History, tradition, dominance, and many years of patriarchal influences are the answer to the above question. Does this need to change? Yes. Society changes; tradition changes; and the male dominance of rhetorical history needs to change by including feminine rhetoric. Where can change begin? It can begin with classroom instruction, with authors and editors of textbooks, and with men.

Teachers need to begin addressing alternative rhetorical styles on a consistent basis in their pedagogical practices. Males, who traditionally prefer forceful prose as past research declares, in this study indicate support for the inclusion of alternative styles: “I have not done many papers with a delayed thesis [*sic*] and I believe that they are probably the most useful. I believe this because they promote compromise...and I didn’t want to lose readers right away” (Male Reflection); and “I just wrote what came natural and it ended up somewhat like a rogerian [*sic*] argument” (Male Reflection). Change has already begun with women—they are writing, researching, and becoming more vocal as time moves forward. However, as David points out, men traditionally have had more opportunities “to disseminate male rhetorical styles” (155); therefore, along with women, they must rise to the challenge of acknowledging, respecting, and endorsing feminine rhetoric as a viable rhetorical theory.

¹⁴ Simone de Beauvoir discusses the Laws limiting the rights of women as she introduces woman as *the Other*.

Radical Feminism: Why Women Should Use Feminine Rhetoric

The feminine rhetoric described above is based on radical feminism, also known as cultural feminism or strong cultural feminism (for consistency, the term radical feminism will be used throughout the rest of the discussion). Judith Evans describes radical feminism “by its insistence that women’s characteristics and values are for the good, indeed superior and ethically prior to men’s, and should be upheld. They and certain of women’s roles have been derogated, devalued, by men. It is part, anyway, of feminism’s task to revalue them, to reclaim women’s heritage, or women’s pride” (76). Radical feminism does not believe in androgyny nor does it desire to overthrow the patriarchal society. Researchers who advocate radical feminism want to celebrate the qualities traditionally associated with the feminine: nurturing, gentleness, humanism, and subjectivity. The operational definition for analysis of the data was based on radical feminism’s notion of what feminine rhetoric is. Just as radical feminism believes women demonstrate certain characteristics, past research indicates that female writers are more inclined to demonstrate a particular rhetoric.

The data presented above suggest that women are confirming the researchers’ claims, even if minimally. Radical feminism encourages the use of feminine rhetoric and views women’s usage of masculine rhetorical style as a disadvantage and the product of the patriarchal society. Sara Mills points out how feminine speech has been characterized: “Those who simply speak assertively or aggressively are conforming to competitive or masculine speech norms, which may be effective in achieving the aims of the speaker, but usually only at the cost of the group or the conversation itself” (92). Mills addresses multiple aspects of the masculine tradition: 1) she implies that assertiveness and aggressiveness are counterproductive; 2) she insinuates that women who do speak this way are merely

conforming rather than their speech being inherent; and 3) she suggests that masculine rhetoric places the writer first and the audience second. These implications are not only consistent with those of other researchers, but they also give additional reason for the recognition of feminine rhetoric. Consistent with Mills' discussion, the students of this study who chose the Rogerian strategy for their final essay did so because of audience affiliation, according to students' comments in their reflections.

Similar to Mills, the data confirm Ulary's findings that women change rhetorical styles to have a voice. As the formality of the essay increased, the use of feminine characteristics declined. Ulary points out this disadvantage (see Chapter Two) and encourages women to self-evaluate and analyze what the masculine tradition has done to women's language. Once the recognition is complete, the woman is free to "liberate herself from the Other's [man's] masterful discourse" (Ulary 143). The young writers participating in this study offer a contradiction to Ulary's "disadvantage" that remains a challenge for researchers. There are women who are comfortable in the submissive position and those who truly believe achieving equality is a dead issue because women and men have equal opportunities in all aspects of life. According to a informal verbal poll taken by me during this study, over 80 percent of the women believed they could do anything they wanted and believed that women and men are treated equally in education and the work force.

Postmodern Feminism: Why Women Should be Bi-Rhetorical

Feminist theorists researching feminine rhetoric cannot ignore alternative approaches simply to follow radical feminism; there are other avenues for exploration. In practice, as this study suggests, rhetorical choices preferred by women by radical feminism theorists were not

always used. Keya Ganguly, quoting Donna Haraway, writes that one theory cannot encompass all women.

It has become difficult to name one's feminism by a single adjective. There is nothing about being "female" that naturally binds women. Gender, race or class consciousness is an achievement forced on us by the terrible historical experience of the contradictory social realities of patriarchy, colonialism, and capitalism. Painful fragmentation among feminists (not to mention among women) along every possible fault line has made the concept of women elusive. (61)

Radical feminism, as mentioned above, centers on universal features of women's experiences. However, as Judy Wajcman points out, "Women's subjectivity, caring, holism, and harmony cannot be universal aspects of women's experiences" (11). Wajcman, in this statement, relates to Ganguly's thoughts concerning the influence of class, race, sexual orientation, religion, and culture on women's experiences. The men who demonstrated the use of feminine rhetoric in this study conform to Wajcman's statement as well. Individuals remain different even within a specific group, and in this study, within two separate genders and even within the same gender.

Postmodern feminism "takes account of the differences between and within individuals" (Wajcman 11) and offers alternative choices for female writers. With respect to the data presented in this study, the ideas offered by postmodern feminism also pertain to the male writers. Additionally, postmodern feminism departs from radical feminism as it avoids any sort of privileging of one gender over the other. The postmodern feminist theory validates the differences in women and values the characteristics—feminine or masculine—

used to accomplish the task. The fact that women and men participating in this study demonstrated use of feminine *and* masculine rhetorical styles conforms to postmodern feminism's position. Postmodern feminists do not see the usage of masculine style as a disadvantage for women. Feminists who support postmodern feminism are conscious of feminine qualities and realize the existence of power discrepancies between women and men. Acknowledging the differences and the power struggles that occur, they explore the possibilities of traditional rhetorical structure to use to women's benefit. In other words, women should adapt whatever style is comfortable for them and can help them be successful. Once increased numbers of women garner success, they will enter the decision-making positions where changes will happen. Until people change the way some see "feminine" characteristics, women need to be assertive and use whatever tools necessary (feminine or masculine) to achieve greatness. Lisa Walsh reiterates this notion: "forge space within the symbolic¹⁵ order before we can even begin to actually create a uniquely feminine 'self-expression'" (349). The data of the study imply that women and men are exhibiting feminine and masculine rhetorical styles; it seems only logical for each gender to have the opportunity to use styles that are accommodating, comfortable, and preferred by the individual. This opportunity means not only to recognize feminine rhetoric but acknowledge its viability in combination with masculine rhetoric.

Combining Radical and Postmodern Feminism for Success

Radical feminism has its positive attributes, but postmodern feminists may argue that women are beyond the concerns of making gender visible, are beyond the necessity of

¹⁵ Symbolic as Cixous sees it is the Lacanian definition of the paternal order of language. "Phallic order of discourse designed to repress, albeit not altogether successfully, any autonomous repression of 'femininity'" (Walsh 355).

recognizing feminine rhetoric. Postmodern feminism goes beyond the radical feminism's beliefs of authentic traits; postmodern feminists question the rhetorical situation and decide the most effective way to achieve the objectives in the written prose, whether the means involve strictly feminine characteristics, masculine characteristics, or a combination of both. The data here suggest that women are using the feminine characteristics presented by researchers, but they are not using them in seclusion. The dual-language usage follows Kristeva's view of "counterinvesting"—to use the language styles that will achieve the projected purpose. By utilizing both styles, a writer does not risk being dismissed for following one specific style. Anne-Marie Smith claims that in Kristeva's theory "female identity involves negotiating one's identification...that is language, the father, the law" (79). Smith continues to point out Kristeva's key concepts: "of identification as a key to understanding and elaborating meaning, of boundary crossing as a radical move in the creation and evolution of any form of identity, of time and history as necessarily both cursive—linear, and monumental—cyclical and revolutionary" (6-7). Kristeva and Smith agree that there are concepts that propose a reconciliation of both the female and male characteristics. For example, a male writer participating in this study described his final essay as a "quasi-Rogesian argument":

Organizing the paper into a structure I have learned was even more difficult. In all actuality, I guess this would be considered a causal argument and I was not sure how to make a causal argument into a classical or rogerian [*sic*] style argument. So I just wrote what came natural and it ended up sounding somewhat like a rogerian [*sic*] argument because most of my paper was just

stating facts and then I tied it all together at the end with the thesis and a call for action. (English 105)

Although a male wrote the above excerpt, it demonstrates the relationship between feminine and male rhetorical styles. Mills writes that “individual women do not necessarily have a single speech style; that is they do not use one form of speech in all situations” (86) and the data presented here suggest that men do not differ from Mills’ deduction.

In spite of the progress, postmodern feminism is criticized. If feminine rhetoric is unacknowledged, opponents of postmodern feminism view this as a disadvantage for women. In response to this, however, Mills offers the idea of “discourse competence”:

There must be a position outside this system of sexual difference where it is possible to describe women and men speakers who are displaying features of neither feminine nor masculine speech behavior, but who are simply competent speakers. By this, I mean those speakers who are able to speak fluently, with the appropriate amount of cooperative and competitive markers, with a due amount of care for both the group and the individual speaker’s own needs. Discourse competent speakers have a range of speech strategies available to them, and are able to adopt them at will; they are aware of the effect that their use of language has on others and can modify their speech according to the situation. (91)

The idea of discourse competence corresponds with the data presented here; however, there are two distinctions with reference to the above quote that deserve attention. One, Mills writes that there must be a type of speech that uses “neither feminine or masculine speech behavior, yet the words she employs are “cooperative” and “competitive” and “care for the

group and individual speaker.” Cooperative speech style and consideration for the audience are considered feminine; just as competitive and focus on writer are considered masculine by researchers. The discrepancies by Mills do not devalue her statement because what she is essentially saying relates to Schowalter’s “bilingualism,” and Kristeva’s reconciliation. Women need to use the rhetorical strategies that are available to them to achieve the objective of the task. Women using what is available to the best of their ability will help them gain access to the domains (traditionally controlled by men—academia, boardrooms, corporations, etc.) where decisions are made. Eventually, women in authority positions will have the power to highlight feminine rhetoric. Women may need to view conformity as “cultural capital to allow them to go onto something else.”¹⁶

Teachers Recognition of Societal Influence

Combining the beliefs of radical feminism and postmodern feminism will provide women and men with the opportunity to address that femininity and masculinity are socially constructed and “are in fact constantly under reconstruction” (Wajcman 9). Most of the ways we write are determined by outside factors: schools, families, socioeconomic factors. In fact, Mills takes this notion one step further establishing a difference between “female” and “feminine”: “Features [of women’s speech], particularly those associations with women’s over politeness and deference, are in fact characteristics of feminine rather than female speech, that is, a stereotype of what women’s speech is supposed to be” (82-83). Believing this to be true, society, and those who have rhetorical influence in society, establish the myth that considers feminine rhetoric weak in comparison to the traditional theories and pedagogies. It is important to recognize the societal construction of gender when

¹⁶ Assistant Professor David Wallace, Iowa State University, used this quotation in his classroom, spring 1999.

investigating whether feminine rhetoric is evident in student composition because how can researchers truly discover a rhetoric that is uniquely feminine if language users and writers are constructed by society.

SIX

CONCLUSION

You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do the thing you cannot do.

Eleanor Roosevelt

Finding a definitive answer to whether a distinctive “feminine rhetoric” exists may be a life-long endeavor for me and other researchers as rhetoric continues to change. Changes in how women and men view and use alternative rhetorical styles will not happen overnight, nor will it be a smooth road. Nevertheless, acceptance of gender differences can occur, by women and men for women and men, by combining what the type of writing preferred by each individual, traditionally male or female, and using this combination to their advantage for successful and satisfying prose. I discovered in this study that women are demonstrating rhetorical styles labeled as feminine but not in overwhelming numbers, nor on a consistent basis. More surprisingly, I discovered that more men than women demonstrated the use of writing characteristics labeled as feminine. These somewhat surprising discoveries do not imply that recognition of feminine rhetoric is not necessary or worth pursuing. On the contrary, researchers, rhetoricians, and instructors must continue the effort of promoting women’s writing until it is valued equally with male writing. Acknowledging that differences exist and are acceptable addresses the avoidance of alternative rhetorics and helps overcome the compromised silence in communication.

Research Questions

My purpose for investigating the existence of feminine rhetoric is not to persuade others to accept one rhetoric (feminine or masculine) as better or to establish right versus wrong. Rather, my intention is to persuade others to acknowledge that differences do exist and respect the women (and all writers) who choose alternative styles instead of viewing the writers as inferior if they chose not to conform to traditional writing standards. The main question driving this study was addressed with each analysis: Are there noticeable differences between women's and men's rhetorical styles in terms of content, organization, evidence, and style in a first year composition course? Female writers did display different content and topic choices, confirming researchers' findings that women choose topics related to women's interests and values. Topics chosen by men were quite different from those chosen by the women. However, just as women are known to choose topics traditionally associated with feminine issues because women are interested in those topics, men chose topics that were of interest to them in the same sense that women made their topical choices. Because each person is an individual, has a unique personality, and has her/his own interests relating to their chosen lifestyle, a particular content choice cannot be based on gender and definitely cannot be generalized among all women or men. Additionally, this study suggests that the participants' choices are gendered and learned. Organizationally, women did not consistently demonstrate an inductive structure; surprisingly, higher numbers of men than women did demonstrate the use of alternative organizational patterns. Personal experience was equally used among females and males, but other evidence labeled as feminine was not apparent in women's writing, contradicting past research. Lastly, writing styles differed

between women and men but not in the numbers originally hypothesized or as past researchers have experienced.

The second question of this research focused on whether or not “many” women are illustrating a writing style consisting of feminine characteristics. David mentions that “there is no clearly developed women’s style that represents individual personality and power of persuasion” (156). Can any one style, female or male, truly represent an individual style knowing each person is unique? At the same time that Campbell advocates for a specific feminine rhetoric, she also points out that not *all* women exhibit feminine rhetorical styles, but many of them demonstrate elements of it (*Women* xix). The analyses presented here coincide with Campbell’s findings. The female writers of this study have not displayed overwhelming use of feminine rhetorical devices, but women have exhibited fairly consistent use of some of the characteristics labeled as feminine. In addition, although not in equal numbers, men are also illustrating use of feminine rhetorical styles.

The third and final research question centered on the students’ thoughts and the effects on pedagogical practices. Students participating in this study reaffirmed the statement written in the beginning of this text about teacher influence on students and the ability to make a difference. While students believe in their own interests and voices, they also believe in the instructor’s control of grades in the academic world. The need to acknowledge feminine rhetoric is evident from the data as well as the need for instructors to recognize writing differences and appropriate pedagogical practices accordingly.

Further Implications and Research

More questions became apparent through the course of this study than were answered. An important question surfaced from the data indicating similarities between

women's and men's essays: how should we view the women's writing that is similar to men's? As equality? Or as assimilation? If women are assimilating to the dominant tradition, have they lost the equity battle, or are they merely using the system for *their* benefit? These questions propel the continued research of women, feminists, and writers. Do feminist scholars and writers acknowledge feminine rhetoric and "lose" because alternative strategies are not acceptable in academia or positions of power, or do they combine feminine and male writing techniques and risk feminine characteristics going unnoticed and hence remaining unacknowledged as part of the rhetorical tradition? While a definitive answer to these questions gives rise to continued research, I feel women have to believe the answer is "no." Women may have to use the system to establish themselves in positions to make decisions—deans, program directors, chief engineers, and CEOs. Another important question emerged from the display of feminine writing styles: Do researchers reaffirm the masculine tradition if they emphasize feminine strategies and therefore separate the two distinctive styles? By pointing out the inequities of the system, are the dominant strategies only reinforced?

The next step in answering these questions is possibly higher level classrooms: graduate study, doctoral study, or advanced courses of specific schools of study such as engineering or mathematics. In this study, I concluded that the inexperience of the writers played a role in the writing production. However, if a study were conducted in advanced courses, inexperience may not be a factor. Additionally, the academic experience that graduate students have perhaps gives them the opportunity to challenge the academic system, without the overriding pressure of getting a grade as evident from the students' comments made during this study.

“Sometimes, a person has to take a half inch to even get the inch”

The reality is, however, that rhetoric used by women cannot be uniquely feminine because women and men are constructed by society. Furthermore, the results of this study suggest that men are exhibiting some features of feminine rhetoric equally to women. Perhaps “gender” is more about power than about differences as many linguists have written. Society and education remain the overriding influences on writing. Society controls language, and as society continues to be male-dominated, the dominant masculine structure will control language. The schools and educational system are no different. Students write what they are taught to write, and education continues to show preference for the masculine style of writing. Unfortunately, feminine rhetoric will not be recognized until it becomes equal with the masculine tradition...until academia accepts it as an equal. The recognition of feminine rhetoric does not mean that all women are demonstrating the characteristics, nor does it mean that all women must use the feminine style. Recognition simply means the acknowledgment of differences. Teachers, instructors, and practitioners are responsible for helping young women and men reach their potential. Individuals can make a difference by embracing, accepting, and promoting feminine rhetorical style as an alternative choice even if the acceptance process is slow, even if the change comes from one individual at a time.

Language is power. Social change begins with language, and change begins with acknowledgment—acknowledgment in the classroom by providing the opportunity to write one’s own voice. From Sarah Grimké to Elizabeth Cady Stanton, from Gloria Steinem to Hilary Clinton...without the soapboxes in the villages and women taking initiative for their own voice, women may continue to lag in stepping up to and into the podiums of lecture halls and boardrooms.

APPENDIX A
HUMAN SUBJECTS MEMO

INFORMED CONSENT MEMO TO STUDENTS

Date 22 March 1999
To Students in English 105, Sections 22 and 30
From Sandi Skwor
Subject Participation in Analysis and Evaluation of First Year Composition Writing

Purpose. I would like to invite you to participate in the analysis and evaluation of writing assignments in First Year Composition during the Spring 1999 semester at Iowa State University. Researching writing techniques in student composition will allow teachers to improve the instruction in first-year composition and benefit future students taking the course. To complete this task, I will ask for two things:

- permission to photo copy your completed assignments for analysis
- a one page written rhetorical analysis completed by final exam week

Time and Place. The study will not require additional time other than your regularly scheduled class in Ross Hall and will not require any additional assignments than already stated on your syllabi.

Data. Prior to teacher comments, I will photocopy your assignments. The copies will be analyzed after you have completed the course and final grades have been distributed. To encourage honest replies in the rhetorical analysis, the students will place the completed analyses in an envelope and give the envelope to a designated secretary in the English office in Ross Hall. After I have turned in final grades, I will collect the envelopes. The project and data will not affect your course grade in any way.

Participation and Confidentiality. The results of the analyses will appear in a thesis and perhaps in a scholarly article. You will not be identified by name in any reports. I will respect your privacy and will change names, if names are necessary. Your participation will be very helpful, but it is entirely voluntary. You may refuse participation without any consequences affecting your grade in English 105.

I have read the memo and fully understand the purpose of the project and my participatory role.

I voluntarily agree to participate in this project conducted by Sandi Skwor of Iowa State University. I may contact Ms. Skwor at any time for further information or questions concerning the project.

I understand that my confidentiality will be protected, and I may withdraw my consent at any time. Upon completion of Ms. Skwor's written report, I will have the opportunity to read a copy if I so choose.

 Print Name

 Date

 Signature

 Phone

 Email Address

APPENDIX B
DEMOGRAPHIC TABLES

Table B.1

Student Demographics

	Females n=17		Males n=32	
	#	%	#	%
Age Range in Years	19-25	na	19-24	na
Freshmen	16	94	28	88
Sophomore	0	0	4	13
Junior	1	6	0	0
Senior	0	0	0	0
ISU English 104 Taken	9	53	13	41
ISU English 104--Tested out	7	41	6	19
ISU English 104--Waived	0	0	1	3
Other College English	1	6	3	9
Did not state classes	0	0	3	9
Number of HS English	-	-	-	-
3	2	12	4	13
4	8	47	9	28
5	2	12	10	31
6	1	6	4	13
7	3	18	0	0
8	0	0	1	3
Undeclared	2	12	4	13

Table B.2

Students' Majors

Females n=17			Males n=32		
Major	#	%	Major	#	%
Animal Science	1	6	Aerospace Engineering	1	3
Biology	3	18	Agricultural Engineering	1	3
Business	2	12	Animal Ecology	2	6
Ex. and Sports Science	1	6	Animal Science (Pre-Vet)	1	3
Liberal Arts	2	12	Biology	1	3
Man. Info Systems	1	6	Biology (Pre-Med)	1	3
Math	1	6	Business	1	3
Political Science	1	6	Civil Engineering	1	3
Pre-Business	1	6	Computer Engineering	4	13
Psychology	3	18	Computer Science	2	6
Undeclared	1	6	Electrical Engineering	3	9
			Ex. and Sports Science	3	9
			Industrial Engineer	1	3
			Man. Info. Systems	1	3
			Marketing	1	3
			Mechanical Engineering	7	22
			Pre-business	1	3

APPENDIX C

ENGLISH 105
SPRING 1999 SYLLABUS

**ENGLISH 105-22: FIRST YEAR COMPOSITION
 SPRING 1999 11:00-11:50 AM MWF
 ENGLISH 105-30: FIRST YEAR COMPOSITION
 SPRING 1999 1:10-2:00 PM MWF
 POLICY STATEMENT**

Instructor: Ms. Sandi Skwor
 Office: Landscape Architecture (LA) 001, Desk #2
 Hours: MW 12:00 – 1:00 PM, 2:15 – 5:00 PM; Appointment by request
 Mailbox: Ross 203
 Phone: 294-9820
 E-Mail: sskwor@iastate.edu

Text(s): Required:

Student's Guide to English 104/105. Department of English, Iowa State University. (Available at the University Bookstore)

Ramage, John D. and John C. Bean. *Writing Arguments* Fourth Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1998.

Recommended:

Kirsznner, Laurie G. and Stephen R. Mandell. *The Brief Holt Handbook* Second Edition. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace, 1998.

**Other handbooks also acceptable, e.g., *St. Martin's, A Pocket Style Manual*, etc
 Material(s): Journal notebook that is separate from English notebook used for class notes

WELCOME TO ENGLISH 105

The best way to be a better writer is to write and practice. This section of English 105 is designed to help students prepare for participation in academia through the forms of persuasion and argument. Students will analyze arguments, evaluate and respond to arguments, and construct their own arguments. Students will continue to develop their critical reading and writing skills as well as continue learning strategies for researching necessary for their academic success.

OBJECTIVES

- to analyze professional sources correctly and appropriately
- to adapt and create writing for a specific purpose and audience and understand why
- to use a variety of sources correctly and appropriately
- to develop strategies to construct effective arguments
- to revise in order to create a polished piece of prose with appropriate word usage
- to avoid errors that distract or confuse the reader

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/ASSIGNMENTS

The two main tasks of English 105 are writing and reading. It is imperative to learn how to critically engage in the readings in order to summarize, analyze, and evaluate. These tasks will assist the student as he/she develops his/her own written texts.

Journals. Each student is required to have a separate, distinguishably different notebook. It is the student's responsibility to have assigned material read before it is discussed in class. Most assigned readings will require a written response or other writing exercises to be written in the journals. Sometimes the response will be due at the beginning of class; other times it will be written during class time. The journal can also be used for your personal writing activities

Conducted outside of class as you develop your own preparatory procedures. Journals will be collected periodically for evaluation and during Finals week for final evaluation.

Major Writing Assignments. There will be five (5) major writing assignments and a final exam (date and criteria to be determined). Throughout the semester, there will be additional writing assignments completed in and outside of class. You will receive specific instructions as the assignments are assigned. All of these major assignments must be completed for you to receive a passing grade at the end of the semester. Major assignments will be penalized **one-half** (1/2) letter grade (i.e. A to A-, B+ to B etc.) **for everyday that they are late.**

GRADING

<i>Scale:</i>	A	94-100	<i>Breakdown:</i>	Assign 1: Debate Essay	5
	A-	93		Assign 2: Analysis and Evaluation	10
	B+	92		Assign 3: Rhetorical Analysis	15
	B	85-91		Assign 4: Rogerian Strategy	20
	B-	84		Assign 5: Final Research	25
	C+	83		Journal	15
	C	76-82		Rough Drafts/Workshops	5
	C-	75		Quizzes/Final	5
	D+	74			
	D	67-73			
	C-	66			
	F	65			

Grading Expectations

- A** Proven excellence of course concepts: through analysis of the writing problem, a satisfactory solution, strong organization, effective expression, imagination, and originality. Essay must have supporting details, correctly documented, and free of correctness errors.

- B** Proven progress toward excellence of course concepts: through analysis of The writing problem, a satisfactory solutions, good organization, and solid expression. No more than one or two small problems in correctness.
- C** Some proven progress toward excellence of course concepts: satisfactory analysis of the problem, organization, and expression, but nothing remarkably good or bad about the paper. Evidence of correctness errors may occur. Failure to submit pieces of work or having a number of weak pieces.
- D** Minimal proven progress toward excellence of course concepts: defect in material, organization, or expression. Sentence structure errors occurring along with several correctness errors.
- F** No proven progress toward excellence of course concepts: no demonstrated performance as a writer and thinker, inadequate coverage of essential points, poor Organization, ineffective and disoriented expression, and major defects in correctness.

Correctness

Although correctness is not the only component a writer is concerned about, it can be a problem if errors distract or confuse the reader. Therefore, please refer to pages 23-27 in the *Student Guide* for guidelines and reference. Proofread carefully, see me, or see the Writing Center if you are having any problems.

ETHICS IN ACADEMIA

All students attending Iowa State University are responsible for following the Academic Dishonesty must be taken seriously as it affects all students. Please refer to the *Student Guide*, page 28, for information concerning the policy and consequences if found cheating or plagiarizing in any way of form.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Classes are based on *your* reading, writing, experiences, and discussions you bring to class. Therefore, regular attendance and active participation are important. If the student should miss class, he/she is responsible for obtaining any material from the class period. Students are allowed three (3) absences without penalty. For each absence occurring after the three five (5) points will be deducted from the final grade. Habitual tardiness is unacceptable; a marked absence will occur for every three (3) tardies and will be included in the total absences and possible point deductions

English 105-22
11:00-11:50 AM MWF, Spring 1999
Ross Hall
English 105-30
1:10-2:00 PM MWF, Spring 1999

As a student enrolled at Iowa State University and in English 105, it is your responsibility to recognize the criteria of this document. In reading this policy statement, you commit to follow the guidelines for the semester in order to achieve the greatest success. If for some reason you are unable to meet any of these requirements, you must meet with me well in advance of the due date(s).

Please review this document carefully and ask any questions you feel are necessary to make sure you understand the terms of this course. When you have finished this review, please sign on the line below, detach this portion of the policy statement, and return it to Ms. Skwor. Signing this document indicates that you have read, understood, and accepted the terms of this policy statement and the procedures this will follow.

Signature

Printed Name

Date

SYLLABUS, ENG 105
SPRING 1999
Tentative Calendar

January

- M 11 Introduction Course
W 13 Reading: Chapters 1,2, & 3
Journal: Set 1, p, 71-73
F 15 Assign Assignment #1: Option
4, p. 76 *A Debate Essay*
- M 18 No Classes – Observation of Cr. Martin L. King
W 20 Reading p. 435-442
Continue Chapters 2 & 3
F 22 Reading “Civil Disobedience,” p. 497-518
Journal #3, p. 518
- M 25 Reading: continue Chapter 3
Journal: Option 2, p. 76 (“The Importance of Work”
given by the instructor)
DUE: ASSIGNMENT #1 – DEBATE ESSAY
W 25 Discussion
F 29 Assign Assignment #2: Analysis and Evaluation

February

- M 1 Reading: Chapters 4 & 5
W 3 Journal: Option, p. 138
F 5 Discussion/Group Work
- M 8 Reading: Chapter 6, Appendix One
W 10 Defining Good Arguments
Journal: Task 1, p. 442-444
F 12 Journal: Task 3, p. 444-450
- M 15 Reading: Chapters 7 & 8
**DUE: ASSIGNMENT #2 – ANALYSIS AND
EVALUATION**
W 17 Assign Assignment #3: Rhetorical Analysis
F 19 Discussion
- M 22 Reading: Continue Chapters 7 & 8
DUE DRAFT OF # 3 (2 TYPED COPIES)
W 24 Group Revision Workshop
F 26 No Class – Possible
Student/Instructor meetings TBA

March

- M 1 Reading: Chapter 9
W 3 No Class – Mid Term Teacher Symposium
F 5 Journal p. 196-197
**DUE: ASSIGNMENT #3 – RHETORICAL
ANALYSIS**
- M 8 Reading: Chapter 10
Assign Assignment #4: “Rogerian Strategy”
W 10 Journal: Set 2, p. 73-74
F 12 Journal: p. 210-211

Mar 15-19 Spring Break NO CLASSES

March cont.

- M 22 Reading: Chapter 11
Journal: Starting Point, p. 247-248
DUE DRAFT #4 (2 TYPED COPIES)
W 24 Group Revision Workshop
F 26 **DUE: ASSIGNMENT #4 – ROGERIAN
STRATEGY**
- M 29 Reading: Chapter 14
W 31 Journal: “Starting” and “Exploratron,” p. 318-319

April

- F 2 Journal: Proposal for campus problem
- M 5 Reading: Chapters 13 & 16
Assign Assignment #5: Persuasion/Argument
W 7 Reading: p. 659-673, “Same- Sex Marriage”
Journal: Optional Writing Assignment, p. 673
F 9 Discussion-Position
- M 12 Reading: Chapter 17, 481-497
W 14 Use of Sources
DUE DRAFT 1 OF # 3 (3 TYPED COPIES)
F 16 Group Revision Workshop
- M 19 Reading: Chapter 15
W 21 Draft Workshop
F 23 DUE DRAFT 2 OF #5 (2 TYPED COPIES)
- M 26 Group Workshop
W 28 Revision Workshop
F 30 **DUE: FINAL ASSIGNMENT #5
JOURNALS**

May 3-7 Finals Week

APPENDIX D
ASSIGNMENT SHEETS

ENG 105

Assignment #2 -- Analysis and Evaluation

Due: 15 February 1999

Purpose, Audience, Format

Summarizing for understanding and writing analyses/evaluations of academic essays are necessary steps for the improvement of reading and writing critically and for the majority of research. It involves reading for the author's argument as well as reading "critically." Your task for this assignment will be twofold: 1) you need to analyze/evaluate each essay providing proper summarization and evidence from the essay to prove your understanding and to validate your analysis; and 2) you need to do a type of comparison and contrast concerning the two opposing view points.

You will read two essays (mentioned below) and write an analysis/evaluation. Your audience will be someone who has not read the essays. This will require you to be thorough with explanations and examples. Follow proper academic format for this essay: typed, double spaced, etc.

Planning, Drafting, Revising

Planning. Read p. 544-552, "The Economics of Legalizing Drugs," and p. 552-563, "Against the Legalization of Drugs." Both of these essays are in your Ramage and Bean text. After first reading, try to put into your own words what the author's argument is, analyze the author's rhetorical situation, and free write what confused you, grabbed your attention, or caused you to question. In other words, read each essay as a believer and as a doubter.

Drafting. You may organize the assignment following a similar pattern to the "classical argument." You should include an introduction that mentions both the essays, what you are "doing" in this paper, and finally your argument (your position concerning the analysis/evaluation). The body of the paper should include sufficient material from each essay informing your audience what the article is about and your analysis. Also included in the body is the comparison and contrast of the opposing viewpoints. (**NOTE** For questions to use and an example of this type of assignment, see p. 48-50 in text.) Finally, you may conclude with your position concerning the article: how each proved his/her point, where you stand on the issue from the evidence provided (or not provided) in the essays, why one argument was stronger than the other (whether you agree or disagree), etc.

Revising. When you review your essay be sure that you are not using the author's exact words to summarize the article or to make your evaluation. If you do, use quotation marks to indicate the author's exact words. Remember to analyze the authors' (and your) rhetorical situation. Practice revision techniques: "re-see" the piece, do not just proofread. Have a friend, roommate, or English colleague read the essay and provide feedback.

ENG 105

Assignment #3--Rhetorical Analysis

DUE: Draft (2 typed copies) Monday, 22 February

Final Draft Friday, 5 March

Purpose and Audience

Simply put, the purpose of your analysis is to illustrate how a text (medium of communication) fulfills its purpose for a particular audience. This purpose is fairly open ended, so be certain to focus your analysis in a clear manner.

The audience for your analysis is your instructor. Because the text/medium for analysis will be your choice, she will be unfamiliar with the text. She will not know the text you have chosen, the context of the text, the purpose of the text, or how the choices made are reflected in the medium to fulfill the purpose. She has no resistance to your thesis, but requires a clear and understandable presentation.

Planning and Drafting

The following steps are designed to help you plan and organize your ideas before you begin writing. You may want to modify the steps as no two writers are alike.

1. Select a text and/or medium of discourse. You can choose an article, editorial, magazine, magazine advertisements, or television advertisements (tv ads require a number of ads occurring during a particular time of the day).
2. Review the text and questions on the back side of this sheet, deciding which questions apply to the text

Steps 1 and 2 should allow you to focus your analysis and formulate a thesis statement.

3. Review the medium. Write out what you think is the text's purpose, audience, and context. The following questions should help you generate this information.

--**Context:** Where and when did the essay/ad(s) originally appear? What does the background tell us about reader expectations and reading conventions.

--**Purpose:** What does the writer want the readers to be able to do, think, feel, or decide after reading the text?

--**Audience:** Who are the intended readers? What does the text imply about readers' knowledge or feelings about the subject? What sort of relationship does the writer establish with the readers?

4. Think about connections between the strategies you find in the text and the text's purpose and audience. *This step will help you generate content for analysis to avoid simple summarization.*

5. At this point, you may want to begin the rough draft for peer revision.

Some Evaluation

focuses on the strategies used by the writer (e.g., content, organization, expression)

analyzes the text

contains a well supported thesis

contains paragraphs that enable readers to follow your ideas

has few, if any, errors in correctness

Questions to Help You Focus Your Rhetorical Analysis

1. What ATTENTION-GETTING techniques are used? Anything unusual? Unexpected? Noticeable? Interesting?
Related to: Senses: motions, colors, lights, sounds, music, visuals,
Emotions: any associations suggested? (sex, scenery, action, fun, family, pets)
Thought: news, lists, displays, claims, advice, questions, stories, demonstrations
2. What CONFIDENCE-BUILDING techniques are used?
Do you recognize, or know (from repetition) the brand name? the company? symbol? package? Do you already know, like, or trust the presenters, endorsers, actors, models? Are the presenters authority figures (expert, wise, protective, caring)? Or are they friend figures (someone you like, or would like to be, or would like on “your side”--this includes things like cute cartoons)? What key words are used? (trust, sincere, etc.) Non-verbal? (smiles, voice tones, sincere looks, expressions) In mail ads, are computerized “personal touches” added?
3. What DESIRE-STIMULATING techniques used?
 - a) Who is the target audience? Are you? (If not, as part of the unintended audience, are you uninterested or hostile toward the ad?)
 - b) What’s the primary motive of that audience? Acquisition, prevention, relief, protection, etc?
 - c) What kinds of product claims are emphasized? What key words? Images? Any measurable claims? Or are they subjective opinions, generalizations?
 - d) Are they any “added values” implied or suggested? Are there any words or images which associate the product with some “good” or already loved or desired by the intended audience?
4. Are there URGENCY-STRESSING techniques used?
If an urgency appeal exists, what words are used? (Hurry, rush, deadline, sale, offer expires)
If no urgency, is this a “soft sell?”--part of a long term repetitive campaign for a standard item?
5. What RESPONSE-SEEKING techniques are used?
Are there specific trigger words used? (I.e., do, buy, get, act, join, smoke, drink, taste)
If not, is it conditioning to make us feel good about the company or product to get a favorable public opinion on its side?
Remember...Persuaders always seek some kind of response.

In nutshell...be aware of content, purpose, and audience. In other words, be sure to analyze the *rhetorical situation*.

ENG 105

Assignment #4 -- Rogerian Strategy

DUE: Draft (2 copies typed) 22 March 1999

Final 26 February 1999

Assignment #4 is taken from page 188 in your composition textbook:

Ramage, John D. and John C. Bean. *Writing Arguments: A Rhetoric with Readings*, Fourth Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1998.

OPTION 2: *Rogerian Strategy*.

Planning. This assignment asks you to practice a Rogerian strategy aimed at reducing the psychological distance between you and a strongly resisting audience. Choose a topic in which you address an audience that has strong psychological or emotional resistance to your position. Before drafting this essay, reread pages 183-185, where Ramage and Bean discuss the Rogerian strategy.

Drafting. Write a multi paragraph essay that refrains from presenting your position until the conclusion. The opening section introduces the issue and provides background. The second section sympathetically summarizes the resistant view. The third section creates a bridge between writer and resistant audience by pointing out major areas of agreement. After examining this common ground, the third section then points out areas of disagreement but stresses that these are minor compared with the major areas of agreement already discussed. Finally, the last section presents the writer's position, which, if possible, should be a compromise or synthesis indicating that the writer has shifted his original position (or at least his sympathies) toward the resistant view and is now asking the opposition to make a similar shift toward the writer's new position. Your goal here, through tone, arrangement, and examination of common values, is to reduce the threat of your argument in the eyes of your audience.

ENG 105

Assignment #5 (minimum 5 pages)

1st Draft Due: 14 April (3 copies)

2nd Draft Due: 23 April (2 copies)

FINAL DRAFT DUE: 30 April 1999

Audience and Purpose

For this assignment, you will choose your audience. Your audience will, of course, depend somewhat on your subject matter. You will also be responsible for determining the purpose of your paper--to prove a claim of fact, to open lines of communication, to persuade your readers to agree with a position of yours, or to convince readers to act.

You will also have the option of what type of strategy to pursue--classic argument delayed thesis, or the Rogerian. This choice will depend on your topic and audience, but the choice can also reflect what you feel comfortable writing.

On a separate sheet, before the main paper, specify your audience and write a brief (25 words or less) statement of purpose.

Assignment

You should choose a subject area in which you have a genuine interest. We have talked all year about "passion," now is your chance to write *your side of the story*. A note of caution: even though this is the major paper for the semester, you will need to narrow your focus. A topic too broad would be difficult to develop in five pages.

Material you use as evidence in your paper should come from a variety of sources: observations, interviews, personal experience, Internet, periodicals, journals, and books. The number of sources you will use will depend on your subject. However, you must include a minimum of **five** sources in your paper, and the sources cannot be from one medium. You will list the sources on a separate Bibliography page following your last page of prose.

Planning and Drafting

This assignment, more than any other this semester, requires careful planning. Below are some suggestions for getting started.

1. If you are struggling for a topic, or before you narrow your subject, do some preliminary research. Browse through the library catalog, the Internet, or the index guides. By doing a brief check of available sources, you may realize your topic is too big or too small.
2. Restrict your topic to an area of the subject that you can handle in a short paper. In This preliminary stage, state your topic in the form of a question and then decide whether or not you can answer it with the limited scope of your paper.
3. Once you have focused your topic, collect your evidence and formulate a working thesis. As you write, you may have to refocus or modify your thesis if necessary.

Notice you have two rough drafts due and a final draft. Between composing your drafts and eventually the final, keep the following things in mind.

1. Consider your readers. How much do your readers know about your topic? Are they interested in it? Do they have strong opinions about it? Do you need to show both sides of the issue?
2. Keep in mind your purpose whether it is to open minds, increase listening, persuade, accept your position, or act on your idea.
3. Interweave your sources into your paper to develop your argument and support your thesis. Be sure that you use sources to *support* your argument and you do not rely on only one source.

Documentation

When citing your sources within the paper and documenting on the bibliography page, follow the MLA format. MLA documentation style can be found in *The Brief Holt Handbook*, Part 9, pages 307-342.

Evaluation Criteria

Since this is your last essay, you will want to demonstrate that you can employ the strategies and techniques we have discussed and practiced throughout the semester. Some of the criteria are as follows:

- a focused topic with an original thesis
- relevant, concrete details that develop your argument and support your thesis
- unified, well-developed paragraph
- a logical pattern of organization
- proper transitions from one idea to the next
- language and tone adapted to your subject, purpose, and audience
- a variety of sentence types (not short, choppy sentences); strong verbs (active voice)
- accurate, correctly-documented sources
- avoidance of correctness errors

APPENDIX E

REFLECTION

ENG 105
 ISU Spring 1999
 Final Reflection (Typed, 2 pages/400 words [+])

Section 22: Due Final Exam Thursday, 9:45-11:45 AM

Section 30: Due Final Exam Wednesday, 2:15-4:15 PM

*To receive final exam points, you must turn in the Final Reflection and attend the Final Exam Session.

**You are required by the Department of English and the First Year Composition program to attend the Final Exam Session. Failure to attend will result in an F in the course.

In the final reflection, you will want to revisit essay #5 and explain the choices you made and why you made them. You will write approximately 400 words discussing and analyzing your own writing. There are no right or wrong answers in this reflection. I would appreciate you being as thorough and honest as you can while describing your rhetorical choices. As a reminder, you will be turning in the reflections during the final exam session, placing them in a sealed envelope, and taking them to Ross 203. After I turn in final grades, I will retrieve the envelopes to ensure our mutual confidentiality.

Some things to think about and address in the reflection . . .

- ~ How did you structure your argument? Paragraphs? Thesis placement?
 Order of evidence? Etc. Why did you make these particular decisions?
- ~ What style of argument did you choose? Why?
- ~ What kind of evidence did you use? Personal experience? Interviews? Stats?
 Facts? Narrative? Anecdotes? Etc. Why? Explain please.
- ~ How would you describe your word choice? Aggressive? Sophisticated?
 Common? Formal? Informal? Etc. Why? Explain please. Feel free to give examples.
- ~ Why did you choose the words you did?
- ~ Did you use any (or certain types) of metaphors or other language devices? Why?
- ~ Think about the effect you tried to achieve. Emotional? Intellectual? Forceful?
 Persuasive? Commanding? Suggestive? Why? Explain please.
- ~ Think about the tone of your paper. Personal? Attacking? Trying to bridge a gap
 with your audience or trying to relate to them? Aggressive? Friendly? Discuss
 please.
- ~ Concerning all your decisions, did anything or anyone in your past (or present)
 influence your decisions? Explain please.

I would appreciate honesty and careful thought concerning these reflections. If you have any other comments concerning your writing or any other thoughts you would like to contribute concerning writing, writing styles, and/or writing presentations, please include them.

Again, I thank all of you for your participation in this study. It has been a pleasurable spring semester, and I wish all of you the best of luck. See you during Finals Week.

APPENDIX F
QUESTIONNAIRE

Attitudes Related to Rhetoric

The following questions explore the behavior, beliefs, attitudes, and expectations of the English 105 students related to rhetoric. Your participation is completely voluntary, and the completed questionnaires will not be consulted until after the final grades have been turned in by the instructor. I would like to thank you in advance for taking the time to help me get a broader picture of your sentiments regarding these topics related to rhetoric.

Name: _____

Permanent Address: _____

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Permanent
Home Phone: ()

Summer/Other

Email address: _____

Gender: Female Male

Date of Birth: / / /
 Month day year

Year in College: Frosh	Soph	Junior	Senior
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Major: _____ Minor: _____

Please list all college English courses taken (if tested out, please indicate)

Name of High School Graduated from:

Year of Graduation: _____

City _____ State _____

Please list all English courses taken in high school

For the following, please circle the number which accurately resembles your opinion. The following numerical scale represents the hierarchy of choices: 5 “strongly agree” down to 1 “strongly disagree.”

1	2	3	4	5			
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree			
1.	When writing for a class, in order to receive a good grade, you have to write the way the teacher wants you to write.		1	2	3	4	5
2.	I can try my own different styles and strategies and still be confident the teacher will not tell me to change my writing or downgrade me.		1	2	3	4	5
4.	A thesis at the beginning makes a stronger paper.		1	2	3	4	5
5.	The majority of the time, teachers expect the thesis at the beginning.		1	2	3	4	5
6.	My teachers encourage me to follow certain organizational patterns.		1	2	3	4	5
7.	Academic writing is justified in having conventional patterns so writing is clear, concise, and understandable.		1	2	3	4	5
8.	Academic writing is boring because we follow the same patterns all the time.		1	2	3	4	5
9.	Academic writing can include emotions, narrative, and/or personal experience.		1	2	3	4	5
10.	Women and men write differently--different words, style, organization.		1	2	3	4	5
11.	Men write better than women.		1	2	3	4	5
12.	Women write better than men.		1	2	3	4	5

For the following, please circle the appropriate answer and explain as completely as you can. Please use the back side of sheet if necessary.

You are given two equally effective essays on the same topic, correctly documented and audience engaging. The only difference between the two is that one essay places the thesis at the beginning, develops the position, and ends with a conclusion; the other essay develops the position, places the thesis at the end (delayed), and ends with a conclusion.

Which do you consider the stronger essay?

Thesis at beginning Thesis at end Other _____

Why?

Again, given the same scenario above, which do you think teachers, instructors, and professors prefer at the college level?

Thesis at beginning Thesis at end Other _____

Why?

In general, where do *you* think the thesis should be placed?

Beginning Delayed End Other _____

Why?

What type of evidence, reasons, and/or backing do you use in your essays? Circle all that apply.

Facts Narrative Personal experience Stats Other _____

Please explain

Had you ever heard of the Rogerian strategy prior to English 105? Yes No

If yes, when and where?

Have you ever been taught alternative writing styles in addition to the “classic” style prior to English 105? Yes No

If yes, what are they, and when and where?

Do you like to write? Yes No

Why? Why not?

Do you believe women and men write differently? Yes No

If no, why?

If yes, how so?

Do you believe there is more than one right way to write a paper? Yes No

If no, why?

If yes, give examples.

APPENDIX G
QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Table G.1

Questionnaire: Students' Opinions about Academic Influence
Females (n=17)

Response	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
Results	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Number: 17										
1. When writing for a class, in order to receive a good grade, you have to write the way the teacher wants you to write.	0	0	0	0	5	29	8	47	4	24
2. I can try my own styles and different strategies and still be confident the teacher will not tell me to change my writing or downgrade me.	0	0	5	29	6	35	6	35	0	0
3. A thesis at the beginning makes a stronger paper.	0	0	2	12	10	59	5	29	0	0
4. The majority of the time, teachers expect the thesis at the beginning.	0	0	0	0	1	6	14	82	2	12
5. My teachers encourage me to follow certain organizational patterns.	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	76	4	24
6. Academic writing is justified in having conventional patterns so writing is clear, concise, and understandable.	0	0	0	0	5	29	11	65	1	6
7. Academic writing is boring because we follow the same pattern all the time.	0	0	10	59	6	35	1	6	0	0
8. Academic writing can include emotions, narrative, and/or personal experience.	0	0	3	18	1	6	8	47	5	29
9. Women and men write differently – different words, style, organization.	0	0	2	12	5	29	9	53	1	6
10. Men write better than women.	9	53	7	41	1	6	0	0	0	0
11. Women write better than men.	8	47	5	29	3	18	1	6	0	0

Table G.2

Questionnaire: Students' Opinions about Academic Influence
Males (n=32)

Response	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
Results	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Number: 32										
1. When writing for a class, in order to receive a good grade, you have to write the way the teacher wants you to write.	0	0	2	6	6	19	15	47	9	28
2. I can try my own styles and different strategies and still be confident the teacher will not tell me to change my writing or downgrade me.	1	3	9	28	11	34	8	25	3	9
3. A thesis at the beginning makes a stronger paper.	0	0	5	16	15	47	11	34	1	3
4. The majority of the time, teachers expect the thesis at the beginning.	0	0	1	3	9	28	15	47	7	22
5. My teachers encourage me to follow certain organizational patterns.	0	0	0	0	7	22	20	63	5	16
6. Academic writing is justified in having conventional patterns so writing is clear, concise, and understandable.	0	0	5	16	8	25	19	59	0	0
7. Academic writing is boring because we follow the same pattern all the time.	0	0	10	31	12	38	9	28	1	3
8. Academic writing can include emotions, narrative, and/or personal experience.	0	0	0	0	2	6	23	72	7	22
9. Women and men write differently -- different words, style, organization.	0	0	3	9	11	34	12	38	6	19
10. Men write better than women.	8	25	4	13	19	59	1	3	0	0
11. Women write better than men.	8	25	3	9	18	56	3	9	0	0

APPENDIX H

QUESTIONNAIRE ILLUSTRATIVE RESPONSES: GIVEN SCENARIO

Table H.1

Which is the Stronger Essay?: Illustrative Responses
Students' Opinion about Thesis Placement

ISU English 105 Females	
Thesis at Beginning	Know where headed [outline the paper for the reader] (6) Easier to read (2) Easier for writer Always used in high school
Thesis at End	See other side Keeps listener attentive, curious
Other	Depends on the argument (2)

Table H.2

Which is the Stronger Essay?: Illustrative Responses
Students' Opinions about Teacher Preference for Thesis Placement

ISU English 105 Females	
Thesis at Beginning	Way teacher learned (2) Easier to teach the method they know "What academia wants" Know what paper about (4) Usually require; if not required, put thesis in beginning to avoid "trouble" Lose grade points if not at beginning "traditional" "common" (3) Easier to grade No encouragement from teachers for thesis at end
Thesis at End	
Other	High school and ISU 104 required beginning "Hopefully high school English does not equal everywhere" Only English teachers would understand at end; "other teachers thing it was wrong"

Table H.3

Illustrative Responses
Students' Opinion about Thesis Placement

ISU English 105 Females	
Thesis at Beginning	Easier, comfortable (4) Only way taught Sound better Have always done it that way Get audience aware and interested
Delayed Thesis	For specific argument Depends on audience Facts, support before opinion
Thesis at End	Feels [listener] involved Keeps attention "Raps it up"
Other	Depends on topic (3)

Table H.4

Which is the Stronger Essay?: Illustrative Responses
Students' Opinion about Thesis Placement

ISU English 105 Males	
Thesis at Beginning	Tells audience right away to keep them (8) No confusion (7) Difficult to build if not at beginning
Thesis at End	Clear and structured (2) Paper would be "different" More interesting Keeps attention (2) Able to develop ideas Attracts broader audience
Other	"[writer] is beating around the bush" (negative response) Depends on audience (5) Neither—important not to scare reader Either—more to paper than thesis

Table H.5

Which is the Stronger Essay?: Illustrative Responses
Students' Opinions about Teacher Preference for Thesis Placement

ISU English 105 Males	
Thesis at Beginning	More familiar More comfortable "Because its traditional" (3) "Standard" (2) Recognized and preferred (5) "Norm" "always been" (2) Helps them (2) Most papers written, especially high school Academic (2) What they expect (4) Want to know the topic at the beginning
Thesis at End	
Other	Know style of teacher Depends on audience Both—teachers like variety Either—High school, beginning; College, either way

Table H.6

Illustrative Responses
Students' Opinion about Thesis Placement

ISU English 105 Males	
Thesis at Beginning	Used to writing that way (2) Majority at beginning Clearly stated (6) Need more "skill" for end Only way learned (2) Stronger essay (2)
Delayed	Be placed where writer "comfortable with the placement" Provide flexibility
End	Allows for build up Avoid "tune-out" by audience
Other	Depends on topic Depends on audience (2) All effective; no matter where if thesis is clear

APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE ILLUSTRATIVE RESPONSES: GENERAL QUESTIONS

Table I.1

Students' Choice of Evidence Used
Illustrative Responses

ISU English 105 Females	
Facts	Credibility (4) Concrete Backing
Narrative	Adds emotion Keeps audience interest
Personal Experience	Personalizes (2) Adds emotion More reliable Get to know why [author] feels Easiest to fit situation More interesting Show writer involvement
Statistics	General reasons Good backing Negative—numbers lose readers
Other	All—use anything for strong essay (4) Depends Like to use variety (3) Variety—express creativity

Table I.2

Students' Choice of Evidence Used
Illustrative Responses

ISU English 105 Males	
Facts	Back with facts (9) Academic requires Cannot refute Adds credibility Easy to acquire (but lack emotion) Easy to work with
Narrative	Negative—can be refuted Negative—get same thing done with facts using less space
Personal Experience	Open with personal experience Easy to use what know (2) Gives “flair” Helps author relate (4) Builds ethos Easy to work with Negative—“feel funny using” Negative—can be refuted Negative—trouble using
Statistics	Good for support Academic requirements Credibility Easy to acquire, work with
Other	Past instructors did not focus on narrative or personal experience Use whatever makes essay strong (6) Use all—“more the better” Variety of evidence gives credibility (2) Depends on the topic

Table I.3

“Do You Like to Write?”
Students' Illustrative Responses

ISU English 105 Females	
Yes	Express self on paper Way to communicate If interested in topic Like challenge Comes easy Express feelings Relieves stress
No	Not good at verbalizing Not fun, too much work Organizing thoughts is hard Don't know what to write about
Undecided	Trouble putting thoughts into words Depends on class

Table I.4

“Do You Believe Women & Men Write Differently?”
Students’ Illustrative Responses

ISU English 105 Females	
Yes	Women more creative, better word choice, create a picture Women bring different experiences (3) Women more passionate Women more creative, outgoing Men technical, plain Men try to be funny or stick to facts Women and men have different attitudes, feelings (2) Women and men think differently Women and men are of course different—“people write differently”
No	Everyone writes differently; not dependent on gender (3) Personality differences Gender nothing to do with Question too generalized

Table I.5

“Do You Like to Write?”
Students’ Illustrative Responses

ISU English 105 Males	
Yes	“Not too bad, but had to” Creative, relieves emotions Learn to better express self (2) Fun Enjoyable
No	Yes, but “do not appreciate being told where the thesis must be” “not my thing” Never interests High school turned me off—teacher did not like my style Time consuming (2) Just for grade
Undecided	Not choose to, but not opposed Yes, if like topic; no, if forced Depends on class, mostly no Trouble formatting ideas; like to give opinion No choice

Table I.6

“Do You Believe Women & Men Write Differently?”
Students’ Illustrative Responses

ISU English 105 Males	
Yes	<p>Men choppy and to the point</p> <p>Men more technical and “robotic”</p> <p>Men use classic and refute points</p> <p>Women more expressive about feelings (2)</p> <p>Women’s tone is better; flows (2)</p> <p>Women think more abstractly</p> <p>Women’s tone is different, different backing</p> <p>Women more emotional (2)</p> <p>Women less offensive and aggressive</p> <p>Women don’t attack; they use delays</p> <p>Women and men have different perceptions of same experience (9)</p> <p>Women and men’s brains work differently</p> <p>Writing shaped by person</p>
No	<p>No evidence that they write differently (3)</p> <p>Write differently—nothing to do with gender (3)</p> <p>Use same means to get point across</p> <p>“Writing is writing”</p> <p>Women and men have different opinions—depends on topic</p> <p>Statement too general</p>

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